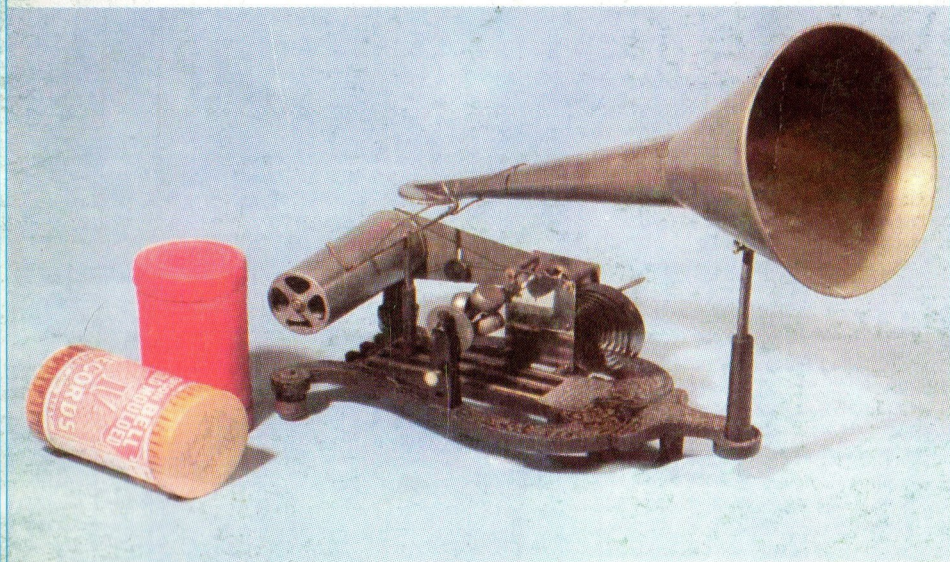


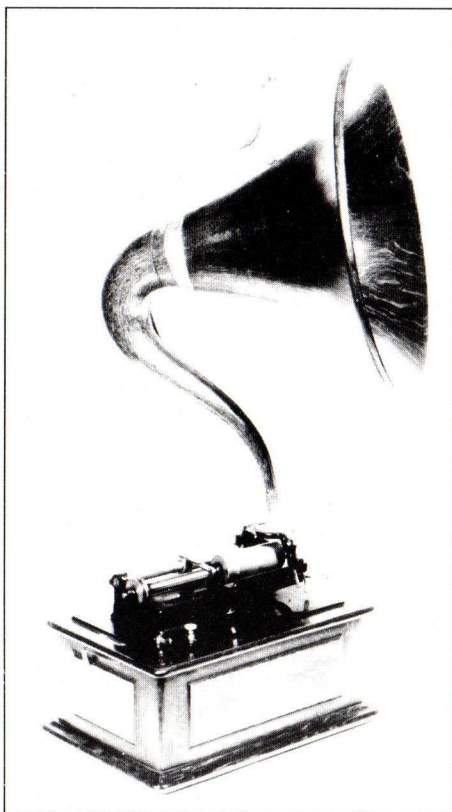
# Hillandale News



Edison Bell Twentieth Century Phonograph ('Puck Type') c. 1903  
See Richard Taylor's article on page 62

**No.222, Summer 1998**

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Tuesday  
21st July 1998  
at 12noon

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# Hillandale News

The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society Limited,  
Co. Reg. No. 3124250. Registered Charity No. 1057538

The Society was founded in 1919

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Issue Number 222, Summer 1998

## EDITOR'S DESK

### Apologies and Corrigendum

Unfortunately the gremlins got into the last issue and some text and two illustrations were left out of Mike Field's article on the *Excelsior Phonograph Range of 1907*. I have run the article again complete with the missing items. I apologise to Mike and our readers for this. George Woolford has informed me that contrary to what was printed in Peter Adamson's review of *Date All Those English 78s Part 2* in the last issue some copies of *Part 1* are available from the Booklist. Contact George for full details.

### London Meetings

On July 21st 1998 Allan Palmer will be giving a programme on *Ballads by Women*. This will be a chance to hear some music new to many and to hear music not often heard today.

On August 18th 1998 *Frank Andrews Presents* will take place at The Methodist Church Centre, Neasden. See enclosed flysheet for directions.

On September 15th, back at Swedenborg House, Paul Morris will give us a programme on *The Edison Diamond Disc*.

All are welcome to these meetings.

Please note that material intended for inclusion in **Hillandale News** must reach the Editor not less than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue**.

Hence the deadline for the **Autumn 1998 issue** will be the **15th August 1998**. Copyright on all articles in **Hillandale News** remain the property of the authors. Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor.

# THE PUCK PHONOGRAPH

by Richard Taylor

The Puck was the least expensive of all the phonographs. In the Brown Brothers Limited catalogue of 1903, "The Rival Phonograph, special line, with nickel plated trumpet" each 3/5d or 39/-per dozen. The Lyre shaped cast iron base machines appear to have all been manufactured in Germany, indeed the name Puck was used by the Metallfournituren - Industrie of Berlin. There are two types with this shape. The flat top casting, with transfer applied decoration, and raised floral casting, has the top highlighted with gold paint. There are a number of minor different details to the base castings, This is not surprising when you think of the quantity and length of time over which they were produced. The earliest date I can find is the Lyraphone in 1898, to the improved Puck machine with two mandrels, for sale by S. Popert & Co. of Manchester in 1906, and the Surrey' of March 1907, over nine years. As for quantity I have no way of knowing, but if one takes the frequency in which they turn up, it must have been enormous.

The basic machine is as simple as it could be possible to construct. The lyre shaped platform, has three legs, one with adjusting screw, above which are three pillars, one to support a cylinder mandrel, another to support the horn, and the third (opposite the motor) for the support and adjustment to the governor. The motor is a four-gear train, light clockwork mechanism. The drive from a small pulley on the governor shaft, to a small groove on the mandrel large end, is by a cross over single cotton thread. This can be adjusted with a small movable pulley in a slot on a zinc plate guard to the cotton drive. The horn on the cheapest

machines were a cone to cone construction, or a zinc plate small trumpet, with the simplest of floating reproducers on the end.

On the more expensive Pucks a pillar riveted into the base, just in front of the mandrel, carried a wire double ended support for the small end of the horn and reproducer. On some there was also a spirit level, to aid the adjustment. On later machines, the horn support was fitted with a spring clip, to hold the reproducer up, to aid in changing the cylinders. There are also different methods to start and stop the motor, either on the speed adjustment end of the governor shaft or in the motor itself. The price also dictated the type of horn you received, either larger spun aluminium horns. or various colour panelled tin-plate horns. One I have seen is very ornately embossed, and another with hand-painted flowers inside.

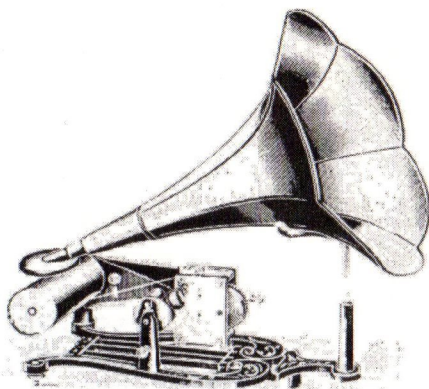
It is said that some factors offered a free Puck if you bought 12 or more cylinders to play them on. But I have not been able to find an advert for that. Below is a list of machines I have found:

Lyraphon	1898
20th. Century (Edison Bell)	1902
Rival ( Brown Brothers)	1902
New Century (Type 1 & IV)	1903
Lyra	1905
Improved Puck (Popert & Co.)	1906
Surrey (Wholesale Cycle Co.)	1907

This, I am sure is not the definitive list, If readers know of others, please let me know. I have in this thesis concentrated on the lyre shaped cast iron Puck. Over the twenty or so years in which I have been looking, and handling



Puck that had a base of pressed steel. As I remember it was painted pale blue, and most attractive, but in other respects it was identical to the cast iron one. There are other "Puck" type machines, which have a more exotic designed base. Also there are the Kastenpucks. All I can say at this time watch this space. Hopefully I will get down to writing more.



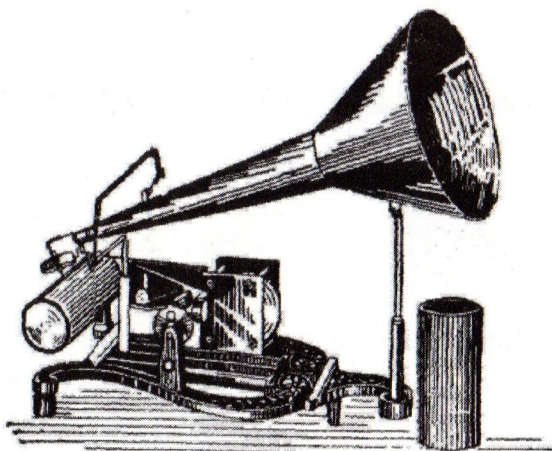
The Lyra

## **EDISON BELL PHONOGRAPHS.**

### **WHAT THEY WILL DO!**

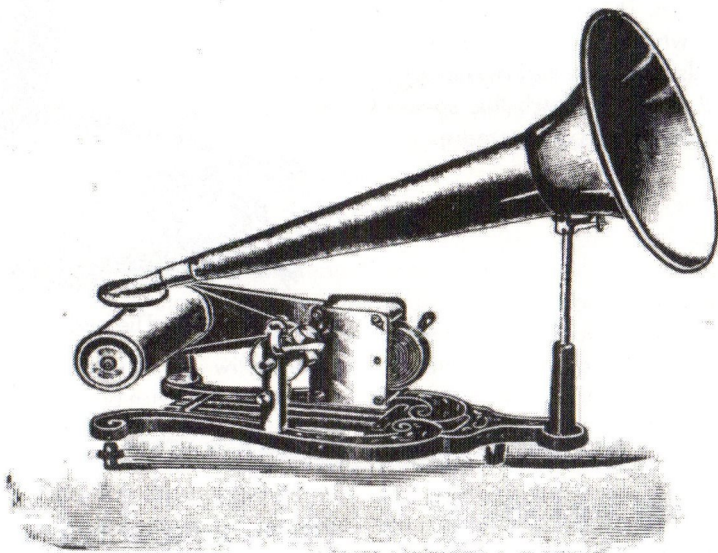
*Soldiers of the King,  
Kitchener March,  
or any or all in our Record Catalogue.*

### **TALK, SING or PLAY—**



**THE 20th CENTURY, Price 12/6.**

Graphophone Type—Weight 3 lbs.



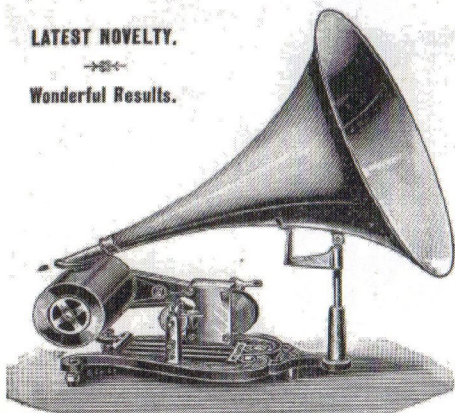
The "Rival."

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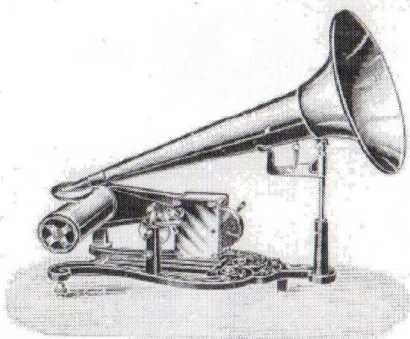
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EACH.

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## WE ALSO HAVE OUR OWN RECORDS - Part 7

by Frank Andrews

### British Phototone Synchronised Records.

I would imagine this type of disc, all single-side recorded as far as I know, was never on sale to the general public as they were made for the use in the cinematograph trade to accompany short films.

This was no new idea, in 1928, for Edison had already developed the possibility of showing moving pictures with accompanying sounds. Since then recordings had been produced to accompany films, and the reverse also, where commercial recordings were listened to and suitable short films made by actors, to simulate the efforts of the recording artists, but in entirely different settings to a recording studio. Hepworth's Pictures which Talk and Sing was a series using this latter method. Recorded dance music was also used to accompany screened dances.

With electrical recording already established in 1928, The Wireless Trader reported on an exhibition in the Scala Theatre, London W.1. in which recordings of artists were played in synchronisation with motion picture films of the artists heard.

In the demonstration, films were shown of Albert Sandler, the violinist, Herschel Henlere the musical entertainer, Teddy Brown, the xylophonist and dance band leader, and of various singers including a tenor, a bass and a contralto.

The sound equipment in the Scala had been installed by Siemens-Schukert Ltd, possibly an associate company of Siemens/A.E.G. Syndicate of Germany.

Three of the films, with sound, had been produced in conjunction with the Blattner Picture Corporation which made films called "Pocket Novelties" and those could have been shown using either British Photophone Records or Blattner recordings. Louis Blattner was the inventor of a recording technique using electro-magnets and steel band tape. The accompanying orchestra in (or to?) the films was that directed by Joseph Nussbaum.

British Phototone itself had been incorporated on June 14th 1928, with a French Phototone Co. Ltd. being formed six weeks later, this latter company in agreement with British Brunswick Ltd. of London, The Ledbury Syndicate Ltd., The French, British & Foreign Trust Ltd and with British Phototone Ltd., itself having been formed in agreement with British Brunswick Ltd. and The Ledbury Syndicate Ltd. British Brunswick Ltd, had been using the Light Ray method of recording developed by its parent company in America, The Brunswick, Balke Collander Co., but I am not sure if that electrical method of recording was still in vogue when the Phototone discs were recorded. No description of the recording medium used was given in the report.

A substantial number of discs were manufactured. Two distinctive features of the labels were an appropriate film reel number, for which the recording was required, and the logo which depicted two male figures, almost superimposed upon one another, one conducting with an upraised baton and the other projecting a light beam. Behind those two figures is shown a cinema screen.







By courtesy of our member, Peter Adamson, I have a list of 26 artists whose names appear on Phototone labels, which, as far as I know, were all printed black on a yellow background.

**British Polyphon Records** were made for a company of the same name which had premises at nos. 1 to 3 Newman Street, London W. and at 27 Jamaica Street, Glasgow, Scotland. The sole proprietor from January 1st 1917 was a Mr Robert Willis, who had bought an business as a going concern at an auction, which had been authorised under orders from the British Board of Trade. The concern in question was registered as The New Polyphon Supply Co. Ltd. strongly associated with Germans and German businesses. It had been a going concern as stockists and wholesalers from the time that the Polyphonmusikwerke A.G. had extended its business into the talking machine business in 1905. I believe comptrollers had been appointed to run the business by the Board of Trade, under powers of Trading with the Enemy acts before it was put for auction and, if I recall, they were Louis Sterling of the Columbia Graphophone Company and James E. Hough of the Edison Bell and Winner Records businesses.

After Robert Willis had bought the business he registered it in August 1925 as British Polyphon Ltd., then on April 18th. 1928 its status was changed from a private company to a public company and its name changed to that of Dulcetito-Polyphon Ltd.

The British Polyphon's known discs were pressed from The Winner Record Co. Ltd.'s masters, which had formerly been Edison Bell Genuine Gramophone Record masters, or were newly recorded for the Winner catalogue. The labels printed, gold on green, carried a design of the world with lines of longitude and latitude within a double framed square. "Trade Mark"

was to the left and right of the square in connecting, double-framed, oblong cartouches; they had some decorative work added on the outside. This was an old trade mark and had been used by Nicole Frères, Ltd. of London, on its catalogues of circa. 1901, which showed different models of Polyphon Music Boxes.

British Polyphon Records were catalogued with a P prefix; the example I projected was P 6 and was from The Winner 2032, which was in the initial list of February 1912 and had The Winner Record Company's manufacturing matrix of 103. It was from an Edison Bell Disc no.547 issued earlier in October 1911 but what the real matrix was, of J. E. Hough Ltd., I do not know. It would have been in the 2700 range. The coupling on P.6. differed from The Winner disc as it did also from the original Bell Disc issue. The reverse of P.6. actually had the artist Alf Willis, if that was not a pseudonym I wonder was he related to Robert Willis ?

The proprietor of the business, in 1918, felt compelled to offer £100 reward to anyone who could point the finger at those who were claiming that his business was still controlled by Germans, and thus causing him a loss of trade.

Information is required about any disc except for P.6.

**British Rhythm Society.** Here is another association of which I know little. It was advertising in 1957 and it sold to its members, 10" diameter special limited editions in vinylite pressings. With brown labels the name style was in longhand script. The catalogue numbers were logically prefixed BRS. and the pressing matrix number on the label I have on a transparency is prefixed Z. BRS.6 has Louis Armstrong's Hot Seven and Maggie Jones with Armstrong on reverse.





As far as I can gather, this Society was formed in America by one named as Dante Bolletino, as early as 1948. In 1952 Bolletino was sued both by Armstrong and Columbia Records, which put an end to his business. A June 1950 American catalogue had these non-breakable "Records for the Connoisseur" priced at 97 cents, and were being offered by Paradox Industries Inc. at 55 West 42nd. Street, Room 306, New York City, 18. The catalogue numbers running from BRS 1 to BR526, BR5998 to BRSIO15 and others, C12501 and C12502 and Cosmo 7501. That concern also carried all the current jazz labels which were listed in *The Record Changer*. There was no indication in the 1950 catalogue that the discs were made for the British Rhythm Society for sale to its members, but that is what the label has printed on my transparency of BRS.6.

**British Song Society** records were associated with the Berners Music Company, which became "The Berners Music Co. Ltd." on incorporation in 1929. At that time this music scores publishing concern was at 39 Berners Street, London, W1. but removed from there during, or by, 1930.

10" discs were pressed for the British Song Society, before Berners was incorporated, evidenced by the fact that "Ltd." does not appear on the label of the side, 2042, and also that recording and pressing was undertaken by The Parlophone Co. Ltd., for this particular disc, around August 1928, as the WE prefixed matrices demonstrate, their numbers used to number the side.

The labels were plum red printed in gold. The logo of the Society comprised an outer double-lined circle with the full name of the society enclosed. In the centre was a treble clef stave with a B & an S superimposed on the upper half of the stave and another S on the lower

half. "Specially manufactured for the British Song Society" ran around the bottom of the label. The British Song Society was at Mitre House, Fleet Street, London E.C. during 1930 where a Mr. Rogers was its secretary. How long it had been at that address or where it had been before, I do not know. It had gone from there by 1931.

Judging by disc numbered 2041/2042 (there was no catalogue number common to this particular example), one might assume that at least 42 sides had been made for the Society, but this is not so, assuming numbers began at 2000, because those numbers were Parlophone's own matrix series, which were in use for its own commercial issues, the series having begun at no. 1 or E.1 in 1923.

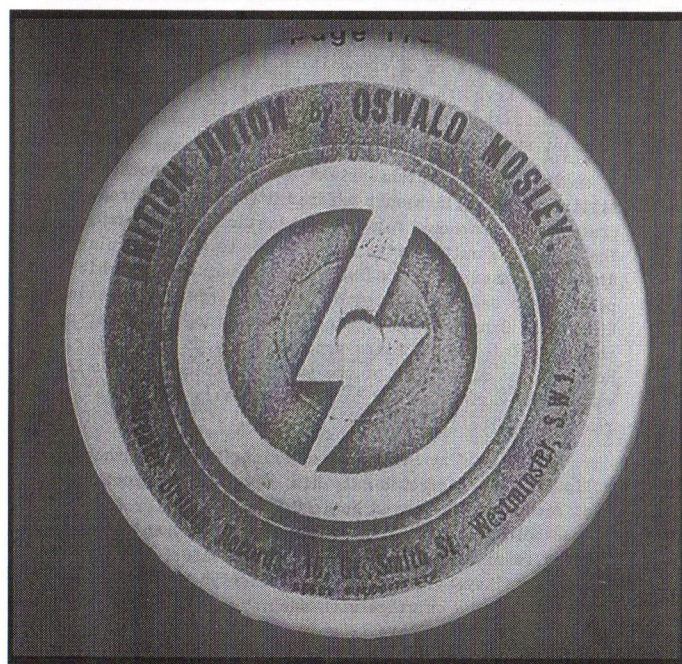
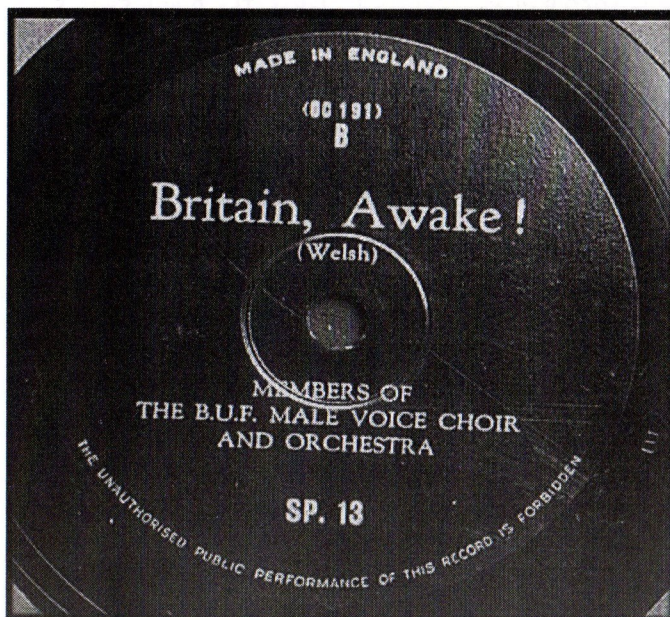
So how many discs were made for The British Song Society, and by whom, remains an open question. It is almost certain that what songs were recorded would have had the scores published by the Berners Music Company or the Berners Music Co. Ltd.

The two titles on 2041/2042 were *Strolling again Down Lovers' Lane* and *Gypsy Melody* from a film or a musical called *The Two of Us*. The music was played by a dance band called The Embassy Six, with vocal choruses. Any more examples please?

### **British Sound Recording Association**

discs. This association was founded in 1936 and in The Gramophone September 1937 edition it was printed "that the Association is now firmly established" and "that it is shortly to issue the first number of its journal" Nothing is known about any recordings being made for the association before the second world war intervened in September 1939. The journal was to be called *Sound Recording and Reproduction*.







The association's activities were resumed in 1946 and the first mention of a disc to be issued by the association was one of 10" diameter. Its number was PR.100 which purported to relate (and I quote) "The History of the Gramophone". It was priced at 6 shillings, but with a 1 shilling discount to bona fide members of the Association.

PR.100 was followed by PR.101 and PR.102 which were demonstration recordings of high frequencies and low frequencies, respectively, both in the 10" size.

Next to be issued were P11.103/s and P11.103/v. These were 12ins discs and both carried identical recordings of frequency tests, the difference being that the /s disc was made of shellac and the /v disc was made of vinylite. They were priced at 9s.6d. each with a 1 shilling discount for members.

I do not have any dates for when, exactly, each became available but all were being advertised in the Association's Journal in December 1951.

**British Union of Fascists discs.** Neither of the two labels which I have seen, sold by the British Union of Fascists, founded in September 1932 by Sir Oswald Mosley, had name-styles, therefore I have classified them under "B". I have no idea how many records this political party had made for the purposes of propaganda.

A Decca Record Co. Ltd. recorded and pressed disc, SP.13 with black label printed gold had matrix OC.190 and OC.191, or were they face numbers because the "B" side, OC.191 also had a number in the label's surround as 1—131000. The A side, OC.190, had *The Marching Song* sung by the B. U. F.'s own male voice choir, which turns out to be the *Horst Wessel Song* of Adolf Hitler's National

Socialist Party, but with English words. The reverse had a song called *Britain Awake!*, by a composer called Welsh. A "B" in the label surround indicates a first daughter pressing metal master from a mother matrix, the B being the first letter in the word Buckingham, the letters of which were used, in sequence, for replacement pressing metals by The Decca Record Co. Ltd.

The other un-named label, shows the Lightning or electric flash insignia used by the British Blackshirts, the label being printed in red, white and blue. Sir Edward Mosley, himself, had recorded both sides of the disc, speaking about The British Union. Greater Britain Records of 15 Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1. was printed around the bottom of the label, but in what capacity that concern had with the recording, pressing or sale of the disc I do not know. It had matrices as LRG24 & LRG25 which appears to indicate recordings undertaken by Abbey Products Ltd. Pressing was carried out by Decca, as the letter B is to be found in the area outside the labels. (Dave Mason covered B.U.F. in *Talking Machine Review*.)

**Burlington Record.** The owner of this label, which was yellow printed in black on 10" discs, has yet to be discovered. The discs could only have been extant between 1913 and the final years of the Great War.

All seen were "Made in England" and from the conglomeration of different matrix sources which were utilised for their manufacture, it is almost 100% certain that they were pressed at the Rosslyn Crescent Works, by The Disc Record Co. Ltd. in Harrow, Middlesex.

The mixed stocks of matrices held there either all belonged to The Disc Record Company, or between it and its contracting clients. The







Nicole Record masters did belong to the pressing company, having transferred them down from its Wellington Mills, Stockport factory in 1913. The contracting clients, who probably owned the other matrices in the first instance, were The Britannic Record Co. Ltd. which in 1913 had an exclusive contract to have its records pressed, but this may have gone by the board, as Blum and Co. Ltd. and The Universal Record Syndicate, with the last of the Diploma Records, the Pioneer Records and Pelican Records as their labels, had those discs pressed at Harrow, The Pelican Records, in particular, making use of the Nicole matrix shells and others, which had been used for John Bull Record, including Beka Grand Record, Favorite Record, Bel Canto Record, all acquired by Weitzner, of the Britannic company, plus other matrices from America, brought into The Disc Record Company's factory, which had formerly been patent infringing artefacts of the defunct American Record Company, which used to press its discs under the company name, but referred to them as "Indian" Records in their advertising and catalogues, to suit the design on their label.

If the Burlington Records began their number series at 100 then there were, at the least, 68 different discs issued. I only know of six, the lowest being numbered 104 and the highest 167. The earliest recorded matrix being a Nicole from 1905 and the latest being from a Diploma Record issue of October 1914. The name style was written in decorative longhand over a simple classical geometric design very similar to the design which graced some of the Pelican Record issues. Some of the artist credits and the titles given were pseudonymous. I played over No. 147 which was credited as The Burlington Military Band playing The Red March, , and with the matrix given as 277, the band playing The Washington Post March by Sousa. The source was unmistakably a Beka

Grand Record of 1905 issue with the band being that of H.M. Grenadier Guards under A. Williams!! The reverse title had The Blue March but the matrix was from Nicole Records, as 2789-37 revealing that the correct name of the piece was Clear the Way March, which had been issued in November 1905 on Nicole Record 5828 as played by Nicole's British Imperial Military Band!! The Beka Grand Record side had come to Harrow via John Bull Records.

A correspondent to one of the trade journals in August 1919 stated that the Burlington Records were produced by the controllers of Stella Gramophone Record, Victory Gramophone Record, Kalliope Record, Pioneer Record and Diploma Record. He was almost correct with the last two labels but had omitted the Pelican Record. Blum and Co. Ltd had been connected with all those labels and, with the winding up of The Britannic Record Co. Ltd. beginning in April 1914, Blum & Co. Ltd let the trade know that factory was at Harrow , with J. L. Young acting as Blum's recording expert for Diploma Records. Blum & Co. Ltd. was re-incorporated in June 1914 with enlarged capital. The next month J. L. Young joined the North London Phonograph and Gramophone Society out of which members formed our Society in 1919. By October Young severed his connection with Blum & Co. and its other recording expert, Giuseppe Gidino, returned to Italy to join the Italian armed services. Billy Whitlock, lately recording expert in London for Favorite Records, signed with Blum & Co. Ltd as a substitute recording engineer.

Since February 1914 Blum & Co had been advertising that it had a speciality in making records to customers' own labels, which would account for the Burlington Records, but made for whom?

**Billy Butlin Holiday Camps** are known to have their own records, recorded for either internal use or for sale to campers as souvenirs of enjoyable holidays ?

The first Butlin camps opened in 1936, but Butlin Limited did not have a London address until during the second world war, when they were to be found in Oxford Street, W.1 in 1942.

I do not know when Butlin's ordered their first recordings. One of the recorders contracted was the company which has given its name to public address systems, whether made by themselves, or not. That is Tannoy. Tannoy products were the manufactured by Guy Fountain Ltd. and a Butlin disc made by Tannoy, implies on its label that there was a Butlin's Ballet which, one suspects, was sold as a souvenir record of a ballet put on to entertain campers ?

I also know of discs made for Butlins by the EMI Ltd. controlled Gramophone Co. Ltd. which issued discs on the "His Master's Voice" label in the JH prefixed catalogue series for private contract recordings.

JH.12 had the same 10" CTP prefixed matrices on both sides of the disc, as did JH.13, so I assume that the same recorded message or other material was to be put to constant use over the public address systems used in the camps.

JH.145 was different in that here were two different recordings. with the songs *The Good Morning Song* and, on reverse *We're All Friends Here* and although probably played over the Tannoy, as community sing-along tunes, they would also lend themselves as making a disc to take back home as a souvenir of a good time spent.

Butlin's later commissioned Melodisc Records, founded in 1951, to record their Butlin's Barn Dancing Orchestra.

{I then played a 45rpm. disc of 1959, Melodisc EPM7-99 in *Butlin's Reel*, played by The Butlin's Square Dancers in which the "Caller" mentions Butlin's first Holiday Camps situated at Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, at Filey and at Skegness.}

**The Butterfly Record.** This label was included in my programme, although it was registered with a recording company, but it was never advertised by it nor by the pressers of the discs The Crystalate Manufacturing Co., Ltd. thus one assumes that the records were pressed exclusively for a concessionaire/dealer who remains unknown.

The Sound Recording Co. Ltd. of Swallow Street, Piccadilly, London, W. had applied for the label name, with a depiction of a butterfly associated, for a registered trade mark to be granted, dated 4 October 1913. But with over a thirteen month's delay in the mark's registration, one can only speculate that the examiners had become aware of the use of a butterfly on the labels of Bel Canto Records and Triumph Records although the owners of those labels had not registered the butterfly as trade marks in Britain.

There were two types of The Butterfly Record, those with red brick coloured labels printed in gold and pressed with the records which were of 10¼" diameter and used the matrices employed in the manufacture of the Sound Recording Co. 's primary product, The Gramavox Record and the later issued companion but cheaper labelled Popular Records. The second type of The Butterfly Record was obtained simply by pasting over Gramavox Records' labels and Popular







Record labels, with complete Butterfly labels or by pasting half labels over the post Great War Imperial and Imperial Record labels.

All those seen have been on pressings undertaken by the Crystalate Manufacturing Co. Ltd. for The Sound Recording Co. Ltd. To date I have not seen a Butterfly label whereon it is stated that the name and depiction of the insect was a registered trade mark.

Where whole labels were in use, The Butterfly Records were given a B prefixed catalogue number. Where partial labels were used the records remained with the original Grammavox Record, Popular Record and Imperial/Imperial Record numbers. The Grammavox Records had prefixes to their catalogue numbers running from A to G, the Popular Records had F. prefixes and the Imperials simply showed their non-prefixed numbers as Butterfly discs. The Imperials had, of course, succeeded the Ye Popular Records of 10" diameter in September 1922.

The highest numbered Butterfly labelled Imperial I am aware of is 1421 which, as an Imperial, was issued in May 1925. But this was not the last year in which The Butterfly Record name was used. The Sound Recording Co. Ltd.'s registered trade marks were all transferred to the ownership of The Crystalate Manufacturing Co. Ltd. in July 1925. Already on the market were the Sound Recording Co.'s small diameter discs of 6ins. size, having been introduced whilst its still smaller discs, of 5  $\frac{3}{8}$ " diameter were still selling, records which had come into the market during the last years in which Ye Popular Records were sold. Those small discs were produced under the names of Mimosa, in both sizes, and Imperial Junior, probably only in the 6" size. The Butterfly Record is known stuck over the 6" sizes and the highest known is 187 which had a recording by

Greening's Dance Orchestra recorded on 7th February 1928. That disc was under the ownership of The Crystalate Manufacturing Co. Ltd. as were the other two discs I have documented. The labels were scarlet with black printing. The concessionaire, agent, or business concern which was responsible for the distribution of these small discs remains unknown but was probably the same as handled the 10" size. It is not known if any 5  $\frac{3}{8}$ " discs were overstocked as The Butterfly Record.

{Played over was 10  $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter B.218 with the music hall song Put on your *Ta-Ta Little Girlie* which was a big success for Clarice Mayne and was written and composed by Fred Leigh. From Grammavox Record matrix 4038 issued on E.18 the singer was credited as Leonard Lee. On the Butterfly label the singer had become Leonard Leigh, the same spelling as the composer. It is possible that the singer was actually Harry Bluff for the adjacent matrices were by Bluff? Originally issued circa May 1911 as a Grammavox Record.}

**To be continued**

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## **C. HUBERT H. PARRY (1848-1918)**

### **JERUSALEM ON RECORD**

by **Robert Rankine**

As a tribute to Parry on the anniversary of his 150th birthday *Hillandale News* readers may wish to recall some early electric recordings of his most frequently sung compositions.

Charles Hubert Hastings Parry was born at Bournemouth one hundred and fifty years ago, on 27th February 1848. A musical prodigy, he was the youngest ever to take the Oxford B. Mus. which he did whilst still a scholar at Eton; in 1883 he was Professor at the Royal College of Music and in 1894 its Director. He was a *'great and various human character...whose interests were endless; he was squire, magistrate, author, amateur scientist, teacher, administrator, organist, pianist, diarist, playgoer, and critic, motorist, yachtsman, and gamesman;...'* and, of course, a prolific composer.

Parry composed orchestral and vocal music - much of it currently out of favour - but his processional anthem *"I was glad when they said unto me'..."*, written in May 1902 for the coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, *\_is a masterpiece of ceremonial music written with skill and stylish aplomb"* Parry's biographer goes on to say that *"the opening phrase is surely one of the most famous choral exclamations in the English repertoire..."* Many readers will recognise other frequently sung compositions by Parry; the air from his oratorio *'Judith'*, better known as *'Repton'* and set to the words *"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"* (J G Whittier 1807-1892) and those of us who have been involved in choral work will know his *Blest Pair of Sirens* and, perhaps, his *Songs of Farewell*. These, and other works by Parry, have been recorded in various formats over the years and some are presently available on CD<sup>2</sup>.

Of most interest, perhaps, will be some early electric recordings of *Jerusalem*, that rousing music which he composed for Blake's *"And did those feet in ancient time"*. Parry's famous tune is ritually sung during the finale of the BBC's annual Promenade Concerts but we should remember that William Blake (1757-1827) wrote those verses in 1804 after inspiration from the writings of Milton. The *"...dark Satanic Mills..."* were of course, *"... not the factories of industrial England, but what Blake referred to as the 'Mundane Shell' - that materialistic state into which man has fallen, to be ground, as in a mill..."*.

In 1916, half way through the first world war, the people of Britain were dispirited and tearful. Almost every home in the land had suffered bereavement. That great war was to cost Britain over three million young lives; something needed to be done to uplift the nation's spirit. It was the Poet Laureate, Dr Robert Bridges (1844-1930) who handed Blake's verses to Sir Hubert Parry suggesting that he should write *'suitable simple music to Blake's stanzas - music that an audience could take up and join in'*. Parry followed the suggestion and soon after gave the

manuscript of *Jerusalem*, written for unison singing, to Sir Walford Davies (1869-1941), organist at the Temple Church, London, with the words, "*Here's a tune for you, old chap. Do what you like with it.*" *Jerusalem* was first sung at the Queen's Hall, London on 28th March 1916.

Today we are used to the rumbustious performances which end the BBC's Promenade Concerts - and long may they continue! But perhaps *Hillandale News* readers might wish to look out for earlier versions of *Jerusalem* recorded when Parry's music was fresh because just ten years after *Jerusalem* was composed, there came the wonder of electrical recording which brought forth a profusion of orchestral and choral recordings.

In 1925 HMV issued Britain's first all-electrically recorded gramophone record (of Jack Hylton's Band)<sup>3</sup> and the following year saw the first all-electric radio-gramophone, a Brunswick-Panatrope. Then the Gramophone Company invested £8,000 in a customized mobile recording unit which was fitted up with a pair of wax cutting lathes and a temperature controlled cabinet to maintain workable fresh waxes. This van was manned by engineers who seemed to have a mission to capture on wax whichever performances were happening around London at that time. Gaisberg, in *Music on Record* (London 1948), wrote "One of the first innovations to follow electric recording was a mobile van, with which we could realize the dream of recording actual performances. We used it with all the gusto of a new toy..." This is confirmed in the June 1927 *Gramophone* magazine by a double page advertisement informing HMV dealers and customers that '...the new "His Masters Voice" Mobile Recording Outfit enables records to be taken at H M Chapels Royal...and at Eton College.'

How did it all work? Charles Reid, Sargent's biographer, describes a 1928 recording session at the Albert Hall with the Royal Choral Society "This time the audience were on the *qui vive*. Under the heading 'An item of Interest', a programme note warned them that the Gramophone Company... would be making records during the performance. They were asked to refrain from coughing which, microphones being hyper-sensitive had been known to spoil many a record. This time the performance was 'piped' to a newfangled recording van parked outside the hall and jacked up against traffic vibration. Inside it were twin recording machines which came into play alternately on buzz signals from the recording manager, who sat with a field telephone in front of Sargent among the violas and 'cellos". Sargent's score had been plotted into record sized lengths roughly equivalent to the maximum running time of (4 min. 50 sec.) of a 12" wax.. "Upon nods exchanged by Sargent and the recording manager depended the success of ticklish co-ordination and split second timings which prompted Sargent to exclaim long afterwards: 'God! The things we did when we were young! we wouldn't have the pluck to attempt them now'..."

Concerted instruments and voices had not recorded successfully prior to the introduction of the microphone and one suspects that the mobile van, out and about on a learning curve, homed in on choral concerts and on rehearsals *in situ*. It is interesting to recall that the first recording made by HMV's mobile unit is preserved on the famous matrices CR1020/1021 (C1329)<sup>4</sup> recorded in the Temple Church on 15th March 1927 and that a few days later, on 24th March 1927, the engineers recorded matrix CR1027-11 (C1322) at Eton College, Windsor.



The Temple Church recording enables us to hear not only that legendary treble solo<sup>5</sup> but also the treasured 1684 "Father Smith" organ which was destroyed in the London incendiary bombings of 1941. The Eton College record<sup>6</sup>, which includes Parry's *Jerusalem*, allows us to hear yet another historic organ to which I shall refer later.

Parry's *Jerusalem* was recorded at least three times in the early days of the 'Outside Recording' and each version was successfully published. The Choir of H M Chapels Royal, recorded in the Royal Chapel, St James's Palace, sing *Jerusalem* as a devotional hymn; the Eton College Musical Society version is sung with that exuberance which is the preserve of the young, and Dr Malcolm Sargent, in his first year as Musical Director with the Royal Choral Society, gives a splendid concert performance which survived in the catalogues until 1951 when 78s became redundant. These three early choral versions of Parry's *Jerusalem* were recorded by HMV between 1926 and 1928. Each was recorded by an outside recording unit and, differing in style, are worth searching for and are certainly worth hearing.

The organ accompaniment is an important and integral part of Parry's composition and the labels for each of these recordings, as one would expect, indicate "with organ". This bland statement masks hidden riches for there is treasured sound to be found in these, and other, early recordings. Which organ is that? Does it survive today? Such questions spring to mind when listening to these pre-war recordings because the traditional wind organ is fast losing ground to that new breed, the computerised digital organ. It is disappointing that early record labels (and record company archives) rarely inform us of the organ used and seldom name the organist. We are left to solve these mysteries ourselves! Is there among *Hillandale News* readers an organ enthusiast who has identified organ accompaniments on record and who might provide us with an informative index?

Let us return to Hubert Parry on this 150th anniversary of his birth, and to three early electric recordings of *Jerusalem*.

**BR 774-1 E451 Jerusalem (Parry) Choir of H M Chapels Royal**

**Recording date:** October 1926 (The archive does not include the day).

**Place of recording:** H M Chapel Royal, St James's Palace.

**Conductor:** Stanley Roper, organist and composer at H M Chapels Royal

**Organist:** not known

**Organ:** by William Hill & Son, Norman and Beard: three manual and pedals, built 1924/25

**Reverse side:** BR198-1 E451 *There shall a Star* (from *Christus*) Mendelssohn (recorded 20th March 1926).

**Record catalogued:**

Britain - April 1927; deleted July 1939

Alexandria - Xmas 1929

Australia - Oct. 1927; deleted Sept. 1932

Calcutta - December 1927; deleted 1929

N V Dutch - Supplement No 3, 1927: deleted 1933

The Choir of HM Chapels Royal at one time travelled with the Court and sang wherever the Sovereign attended Divine Service but it now mainly serves the Royal Chapel, St James's Palace, which dates from the time of Henry VI 111; *Tudor in style the decoration of its lofty ceiling is attributed to Holbein; it has been the setting for many Royal ceremonies including the marriage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.* It was in the Royal Chapel, St James's Palace, that the body of Diana, Princess of Wales, lay before her burial service which took place in Westminster Abbey on 6th September 1997. The red and gold coated choristers of H M Chapels Royal appear on our television screens annually leading the praise at the annual Cenotaph service but the Choir is an ancient foundation, dating from 1135. Down the ages a long line of English musicians have been associated with the it, including the composers Henry Purcell (1659 - 1695) and Sir Arthur Sullivan<sup>7</sup> (1842 - 1900) who began their careers as 'children of the Chapel Royal Choir'.

A new organ, built by William Hill & Son, Norman and Beard, was presented by H M King George V and opened on 8th February 1925.

The choir, consisting of ten "children" and six "Gentlemen", directed by Stanley Roper (1878 - 1953) made this recording of Parry's *Jerusalem* in the St James's Palace Chapel in October 1926. The Gramophone (April 1927) said "This is quite the best record yet issued of what looks like being our second National Anthem (and a splendid one at that)". The Musical Times (May 1927) said *The combination of choir and organ is unusually successful in the record of the Chapel Royal Choir singing "Jerusalem", and a chorus from Mendelssohn's 'Christus' (There Shall a Star). Parry's song, however, calls for a crowd hence the Mendelssohn piece is the better of the two. The singing here is capital and the organ and choir are well balanced."*

**CR1027-11 C1322 Jerusalem (Parry) Eton College Musical Society**

**Recording date:** 24th March 1927

**Place of recording:** School Hall, Eton College

**Conductor:** Dr Henry Ley

**Organ:** by Henry Willis 1924 (incorporating a 1773 organ by Mittenreiter)

**Organist:** not known

**Side 1:** CR1027-1 a). *Carmen Etonense* (Barnby) b). *Jerusalem* (Parry)

**Reverse side:** CR1026-1 a). *Just as the tide was flowing* (Bradbury) b). *Bobbie Shaffoe* (Whittaker). (reverse side unaccompanied).

**Catalogued:**

Britain - May 1927 deleted October 1938

Australia - Nov. 1927; deleted Mar. 1930

Calcutta - Sept. 1927; deleted 1929

New Zealand - Nov. 1927

Sir Hubert Parry is Eton College's most distinguished musician of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; it was the young Parry who founded the Eton College Musical Society while he was a scholar.



Dr Henry Ley (1887-1962), taught organ at the Royal College of Music from 1919 to 1941 and was Musical Director at Eton College from 1926 until 1945.

The 'Dutch' organ, School Hall, Eton College, was originally built in 1773 by Johannes Mittenreiter of Leiden, for St Mary's Episcopal Church, Rotterdam (the English Church). After a chequered career and several rebuilds, the organ was rescued when St Mary's was demolished in 1914; it was gifted to Eton College where it was set up in School Hall in 1924 as an integral part of a large four manual organ built by Henry Willis & Sons and Lewis & Co. Ltd. This was the organ which was used to accompany the Eton College Musical Society in the 1927 recording but, 45 years later, it was reduced in size by Flentrop Orgelbouw. Flentrop restored the St Mary's organ to almost original condition and returned it to School Hall, Eton in February 1973<sup>8</sup>

**BR2267-1    B3125    Jerusalem (Parry) Royal Choral Society**

**Recording date:** 10th December 1928;

**Place of recording:** Royal Albert Hall

**Conductor:** Dr Malcolm Sargent

**Organ:** by "Father" Willis 1870/71 (enlarged by Arthur Harris of Durham 1923/24)

**Organist:** possibly Arnold Greir

**Reverse side:** BR2264-1 *Now once again our hearts we raise* (A. Webber)<sup>9</sup>

**Catalogued:**

Britain - December 1929; Deleted: March 1951

Australia - Jan. 1931; deleted Jan. 1935

New Zealand - Jan. 1931

Switzerland - Nov./Dec. 1929

Conductor Dr (later Sir) Malcolm Sargent, from his earliest days as chorister and organ pupil, was a gifted and vivacious musician who by the age of 16 was an ARCO and B. Mus. and, aged 19, had obtained his doctorate in music. His biographer says of him "*He was pre-eminent as a choral conductor; no one had ever been known who handled mammoth choirs with such skill*".

The Royal Choral Society<sup>10</sup>, formed by Gounod in 1871 for the opening of the Royal Albert Hall, is conducted in this 1928 record of *Jerusalem* by Malcolm Sargent in his first year as the Society's conductor-in-chief. *The Gramophone*, December 1929, writes that "*...Dr Sargent has also gained the best record yet of Parry's Jerusalem...*"

The Albert Hall organ by Henry Willis was his magnum opus; it has four manuals and pedals with, originally, 111 speaking stops and 10,000 pipes. It was first played by W T Best on 29th March 1871 in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. "*...No pains or expense were spared in the choice of materials or the quality of workmanship - a Royal organ indeed!...*" *The Musical Times* of March 1934 continues "*... of its full chorus, its limpid transparency and*

thrilling cohesion there could be no two opinions..." This Willis organ was re-built and enlarged by Arthur Harris of Durham during 1923/24 and it is the enlarged instrument which we hear on the Sargent recording. The organist was probably Arnold Greir<sup>11</sup>.

### Coda:

Towards the end of his life Parry wrote six 'Songs of Farewell' of which group this is No 1. The tragedy of the Great War, and personal losses, were factors which contributed to the evolving of this 'Swan' group. For they were in a sense 'Swan' songs. Living, Parry had many notes; dying, he struck this great note. It is the humanity of 'Old Belief' that makes it so touching. One feels in it a kind of feverish desire to sing out to a sad world<sup>12</sup>.

But, as we have noted, he rose above the horrors of the great war and composed *Jerusalem* for us as a triumphal musical expression of national pride. C. HUBERT H. PARRY (1848-1918)

### Notes:

1. Parry: Processional anthem for a Coronation - *I was glad when they said unto me*: EMI (1937) HMV RG1 Choir of Westminster Abbey augmented by the Choir of H M Chapels Royal. Recorded during the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, 12th May 1937. EMI (1953) HMV ALP1056 Choir of Westminster Abbey augmented by the Choir of H M Chapels Royal. Recorded during the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, 2nd June 1953. (now available on EMI CD EX5 66582-4, issued February 1998)
2. Choir of St George's Chapel, Windsor: Hyperion: CDA66273 recorded 17th/18th July 1987. (Parry studied organ under Sir George Elvey (1816-1896), organist at St George's Chapel, Windsor). This modern recording includes Parry's *I was glad*; *Jerusalem*; his 'Songs of Farewell' and some choral service music. The four manual organ by Gray & Davison, of 1883, (which was rebuilt in 1966 by Harrison & Harrison) may be heard on many pre-war 78s of the St George's Chapel Choir.
3. Jack Hylton (b. 2 July 1892 d. 29 Jan 1965) - Alan Jenkins: *The Twenties* - London 1974 p 215. [The Editor tells me that Jenkins is wrong - the first electrically recorded gramophone record (of the burial service of the Unknown Warrior) was made by Columbia in 1920. "*The Destroyer Verdun brought to Britain the body of an unknown Warrior, to be buried in Westminster Abbey...Gramophone records of the burial service were sold at 7/6d each.*" Jenkins, p208]
- 4 & 5. HMV C1329 "*The runaway hit record of 1927 in Britain was not any 'popular' song but Mendelssohn's O for the wings of a dove, sung by Master Ernest Lough with the Temple Church Choir, which has been a steady seller ever since ... This record was the Gramophone Company's first to sell over a million copies (it sold 650,000 copies in its first six months in the UK alone)*". (Alan Jenkins: *The Twenties* - London 1974). It was the first record made by the Company's new mobile van. In "*Music on Record*" Gaisberg writes "a happy combination of chance helped to make this lovely record: the soft, acoustic resonance of the church, a choir with a fine discipline, a choirmaster who was first rate trainer, and a gifted boy with a musical sensibility and a silver voice just then at its prime..." *Hear my Prayer*, (Mendelssohn) includes *O for the wings of a Dove*, the treble solo famously sung by Ernest Lough (C1329). This, and other early recordings by Lough and the Temple Church Choir, are currently available, remastered, on Pearl GEMM CD 9211



6. Music from Eton: Modern recordings of 6. Music from Eton: Modern recordings of Jerusalem, Carmen Etonense, The Eton Boating Song etc. are currently available on CD (for details refer to *Music from Eton* on the Eton College web-site).
7. Sir Arthur Sullivan: It was 'by Queen Victoria's express command that a portion of Sullivan's funeral service was held in 'the Chapel Royal' where he had begun his musical career as a chorister.
8. Dutch Organ: The rebuilt 'Dutch' organ at Eton may be heard in a recital played by Peter Hurlford on a long player recorded in 1974 and issued by ARGO on ZRG783 (matrices ZRG-4091-16 and ZRG-4092-16). (The 'Dutch' organ may also be heard on CDs of the Eton College Organs - for details refer to *Music from Eton* on the Eton College web-site).
9. B3125 BR2264-1 Royal Choral Society: A Webber, whose name appears on the recording sheet, may have been the arranger of this stunning canon set to the words "Now once again our hearts we raise" What is here recorded is the joyful hymn tune *Lasst uns Erfreuen* from the *Geistliche Kirchengesäng* (Cologne, 1623); listeners will recognise it as the music usually sung with the hymn *All creatures of our God and King*. The Royal Choral Society's version of *Jerusalem* is currently available, remastered, on Pearl GEMM CD 9380. (The notes accompanying the CD are wrong - the accompaniment is not orchestral!)
10. The Royal Choral Society: While living in England, between 1870-1875, Charles Francois Gounod (1818-1893) founded and conducted the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society, which was formed in March 1871 for the opening ceremony of the new Royal Albert Hall. In 1888 the Society shortened its name to *The Royal Choral Society*.
11. The Albert Hall: "the organist - in 1924 as for decades, Arnold Greir." (Reid: Malcolm Sargent, London 1968).
12. "Swan songs" - from programme note by Sir Hugh S Robertson for Parry's *There is an old belief*

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### **Acknowledgements:**

David English of EMI Archives;  
 Paul Houghton of the National Pipe Organ Register.

# THE 1907 EXCELSIOR CYLINDER PHONOGRAPH RANGE

by Mike Field

Phonograph manufacturers seemed to have favoured the use of precious stone names for their products. The Edison GEM, the Graphophone JEWEL and the German(?) KOH-INOOR are some examples. The Excelsior Company named its new range for the 1906/7 season with names of precious stones perhaps inspired by their Hatton Market address.

In 1907 John G. Murdoch, marketed three machines where the quality of the machine was reflected by the choice of a precious stone name. The cheapest machine retailing at 32/6 was the "Pearl", the intermediate retailing at 45/- was called the "Ruby" and the top of the range at 75/- was named the "Diamond". All are well made machines with most parts made in cast iron although there is common weakness in the governor support casting which is often found to be cracked. The design of the single motor is similar in all three models but the Ruby differs from the other two in that the governor is mounted on the same side as the winding handle.

The most commonly found "Pearl" (Figs. 1 and 2) was fitted with a single spring motor and initially -was for two minute cylinders only. Later versions had a two and four minute arrangement but these seem to be comparatively rare. Fig. 3 shows a close up of the two and four minute gearing with the cast iron cover removed (not shown) There is also a small lever (again not shown) pivotted on the bedplate which operates in the groove to the left of the gears to change speeds. There is

a small lever (again not shown) pivotted on the bedplate which operates in the groove to the left of the gears to change speeds. There is a small plate marked "2 and 4 minute" in front of the lever. The top works are finished in black enamel lined with wide red lining in the style of the The reproducer is the floating type usually engraved with the "EWC" trademark and the word "Reproducer". A recorder was supplied but there is no shaving facility.

The "Ruby" (Figs. 4 and 5) was also fitted with a single spring motor but the spring and motor plates are more substantial. The top works are again finished in black enamel but the lining is gold and somewhat similar to the Edison "Standard". The reproducer is the same as that supplied with the Pearl. Again there is no shaving facility although a recorder was supplied. Two and four minute Ruby machines may have been available but have not been seen by the Author.

The top of the range "Diamond" (Figs. 6 and 7) still had a single spring motor but the spring was even larger than the "Ruby" and the cylinder mandrel is longer for playing six inch records as well as the standard size. The advertising claimed that the "Diamond" would play 4 to five cylinders at one winding which seems a little doubtful especially for the 6 inch variety The governor weights are generally round balls on Excelsior machines so the cylindrical ones shown in Fig.6 may not be original. The wooden frame to which the works are fixed is hinged to allow easy access to the motor in the style of Edison machines and the



black enamel and gold lining also follows the style of the Edison "Standard". The "Diamond" shown in the photograph has a reproducer carrier arm identical with the one fitted to the Ruby but the advertisement by Murdochs shows a slightly different arrangement. If anyone has a "Diamond" I would be pleased to have details of the carrier arm.

All machines were supplied with a 10¼ inch by 12¼ inch flower horn. The one supplied with the "Pearl" was painted tin plate while the other two were described as "solid" brass.

### **Historical note condensed from extensive information provided by Frank Andrews.**

Excelsior machines and cylinders may be presumed to date from 1899 when the name "Excelsior" for Phonographs and cylinders was submitted by P. Richard of Cologne on the 21st of April 1899 and registered on the 31st of May 1899.

The Excelsior Company -was known by at least three names in the early part of the century: "Excelsiorwerk G.m.b.H", "Excelsiorwerke

G.m.b.H. Fabrik fur Feinmechanik", and by 1912, "Excelsior m.b.H., Laden Kohler & Kracht". The second named company applied for the "EWC" trademark, which was registered on the 28th of August 1902.

It is possible that machines and records were available from the start in England, possibly from John G. Murdoch, but certainly supplies were available from "Excelsiorwerk, 17 Hatton Garden" under the direction of Albert V. Fischer in 1904. Also apart from Murdochs, there were at least two other outlets trading as the "Excelsior Phono Stores" at this time but whether they had Excelsiorwerk backing is not clear. The confusing number of "official" sales outlets continued when in 1907, the sale of Excelsior machines was put under the joint control of John G. Murdoch, "The New Polyphon Supply Co." and Barnet Samuel and Sons Ltd.

Undoubtedly the hey-day of the cylinder machine market for Excelsior was during the first decade of the Twentieth Century but gramophones were available well into the 1920s judging from the re-registration of trade names as late as 1927.



FIG.1

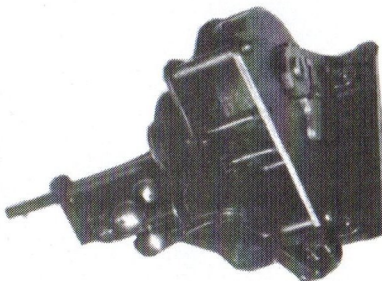


FIG.2

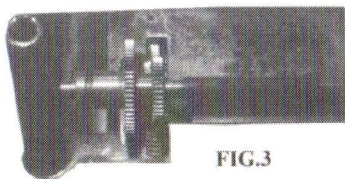


FIG.3

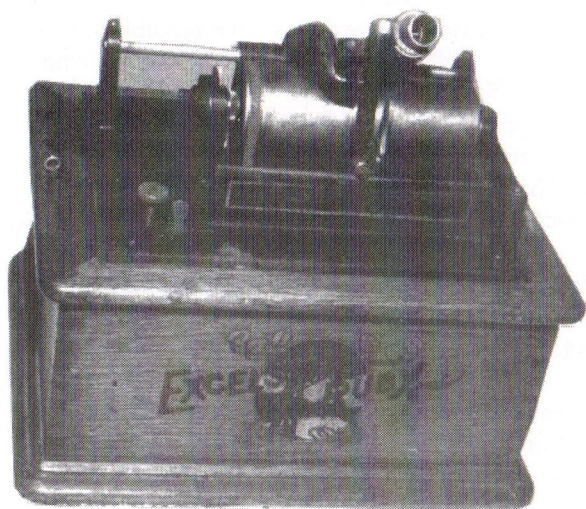


FIG. 4

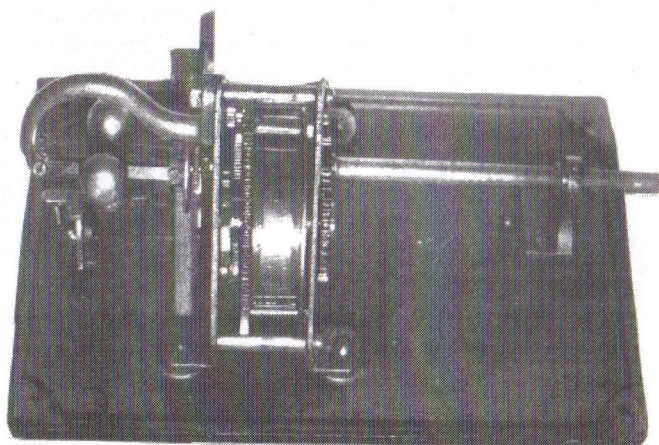
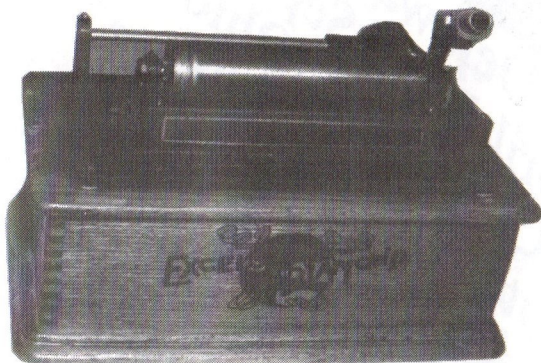
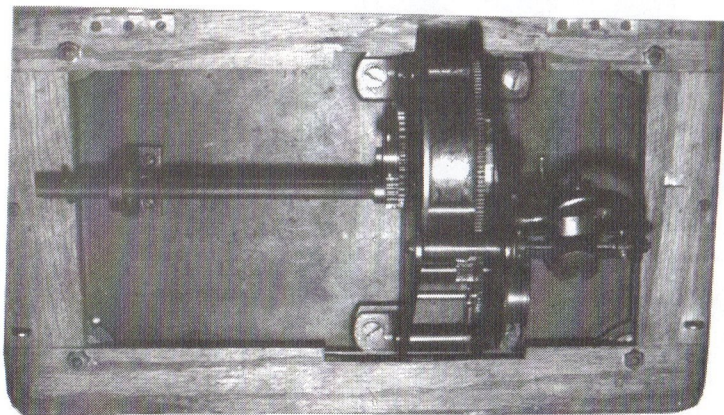


FIG. 5





**FIG. 6**

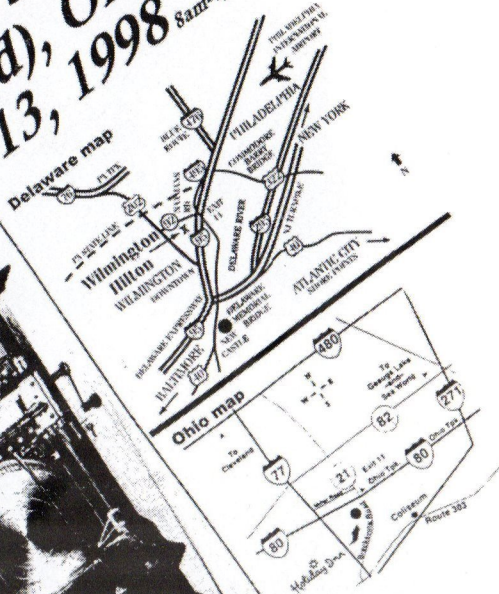


**FIG. 7**

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# MY MOTHER, AUNTS, UNCLES, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

by Ewen Langford

This is a brief account of my Mother, the soprano Caroline Hatchard and some of her vocal contemporaries during her musical career from 1900-1953. A few of these became family friends and therefore known to my brother and myself as aunts and uncles.

My Mother was born in Portsmouth in 1883, one of five daughters, no sons. She showed at an early age an exceptional vocal talent, and at the age of seventeen attended the Royal Academy of Music studying with Madame Agnes Larcombe. The latter was a pupil of Manuel Garcia, associate of Rossini's, so the tradition reaches well back in the nineteenth century. She was, as I remember her in old age, a tall gaunt fearsome lady with a grey bun, steel rimmed spectacles and eyes like gimlets. Many of Mother's fellow students, apart from singers, became well renowned instrumentalists and composers such as Aubrey Brain, Myra Hess, Irene Scharrer, Hubert Bath and Sir Arthur Bliss. These and many others helped to lay the foundations leading to the pre-eminence of English music as it is today. No longer can we be called "The Land without Music".

As a student Mother sang in a number of Patrons Fund Concerts at the Queens Hall, there being no hall at the RAM at the time. There she must have attracted the attention of Sir Henry Wood who engaged her for her first Promenade Concert in 1904 at the age of twenty one. This was to be her first of thirteen 'Proms', the last being in 1928 which was broadcast. One of the pieces she sang was *Orpheus with his Lute* by Sir Arthur Sullivan

for which there is a rather poorly recorded hill and dale centre start Pathé disc doing no justice to her voice. Switching mythology the and the instrument around I chose Lionel Monckton's *Pipes of Pan* instead, an improvement.

Caroline's career took in three phases, musical comedy, opera and concert/oratorio work. The first lasted roughly two to three years, playing at theatres such as Daly's and the Apollo in shows like *The Three Kisses* and *Les Merveilleuses*, or *The Wonderwomen*, now long forgotten. Later she returned to the theatre once or twice in more serious productions, for example Sheridan's *Critic*, which was a play with musical interludes. From one of the *Wonderwomen* to her debut at Covent Garden as the Dew Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel*; a Rhine maiden, a Valkyrie, a Norn, the Wood Bird in *Siegfried* and the Shepherd Boy in *Tannhäuser* followed. These were in both English and German leading to the first production of the complete Ring in English under the great Dr. Hans Richter who presided over the first complete Ring at Bayreuth forty years previously. Caroline's fellow artists in this venture included Agnes Nicholls, Edna Thornton, Maude Percival-Allen, Edith Furmedge, Walter Hyde, Maurice D'Oisley, Robert Radford, Frederick Austin, and many others, some becoming lifelong friends. After the Wagner Seasons Caroline sang in several Grand Opera Syndicate Seasons being on stage with divas such as Tetrazzini, Melba, Destinn and Edvina in roles as Kate Pinkerton and Flora Bervoix.



In was during this period in 1908 that Caroline was chosen along with Edna Thornton to be the only two English singers in the gala Performance at Covent Garden to commemorate the signing of the Entente Cordiale in front of the French President, Edward VII, Queen Alexandra, and a distinguished audience including the Nizam of Nepaul and Winston. S. Churchill. The auditorium was bedecked with flowers and no lady was allowed in without at least one tiara. The operatic excerpts were Act II *Faust* (Gounod) and Act I *The Pearl Fishers* (Bizet). The former was performed by Melba, Zenatello, Vanni-Marcoux, Edna Thornton and Caroline Hatchard. The cast of the *Pearl Fishers* excerpt consisted of Tetrzzini, John McCormack and Sammarco. The nearest we have on record of this magnificent occasion, probably Mother's highest spot in her own career, is perhaps the *Final Trio* from *Faust* sung by Melba, McCormack and Sammarco. This piece always reminds me of Jeannette MacDonald singing this whilst dodging falling masonry in the San Francisco earthquake.

A singer of an earlier generation who gave Caroline encouragement was Ben Davies. I have found no record of them having sung together, although she had enormous respect for him. To remember a great artist here he is singing *From Love's sickness to fly* by Henry Purcell.

In 1910 Caroline joined the Beecham Opera Company, where at His Majesty's Theatre *The Tales of Hoffman*, *Die Fledermaus*, *A Summers Night*, *Feuersnot*, *The Impresario*, and were presented. Apart from the others, she sang Olympia and Guiletta (*Tales of Hoffman*) and Rodelinda (*Die Fledermaus*). These were successful enough for the Gramophone Company to invite members of the Beecham company to Hayes on July 27th & 28th 1910

to record excerpts of these operas. Of the twenty takes only four were issued. There were three takes of the *Doll Song* sung by my Mother, the first of which was issued and indeed was the first record conducted by Beecham himself.

Matrices of two other pieces with Caroline were made but not issued, one a solo, the other a trio with Edith Evans and Frederick Ranalow. I wonder what happened to them? The remaining three issued numbers were two by Walter Hyde also from *The Tales of Hoffman* and the *Overture to Die Fledermaus*. After the run at His Majesty's the Company went on an extensive tour north of Watford.

*The Legend of Kleinsack* and *The Doll Song* were played in succession.

Caroline described part of this session at Hayes: singing into the recording horn, a sort of 'musical minder' with his hands ready on her shoulders to pull her back in the loud bits so that the wax would not be blasted. She did not approve of this practice, possibly the cause of not liking recording very much: only twenty one titles in a thirty year career is not an enormous amount. At the conclusion of each take the wax would first be examined by the engineer, in this case none other than Will Gaisberg.

Edna Thornton and Robert Radford have already been mentioned, however they were very close friends of our family regarded by my brother and myself as Aunt Edna and Uncle Bob. I did not know Aunt Edna very well, however my brother was very ill indeed soon after the first war and convalesced at her home in Bournemouth. Not to be outdone I stayed there too much later on with my parents. Uncle Bob was a great character very kind and full of fun. He used to make up risqué words during rehearsals if he thought the English translations

too banal. His wife, Aunt Ada, lived with my parents during the last war as she was bombed out. She had a vast collection of 78s which I would have given my eye teeth to lay my hands on.

Their daughter Winifred was a fine musician working at the Morley College. She was also a great family friend and worked a lot with Caroline on French 'Melodie' promoting the music of Poulenc and Pierre Bernac. So I played a duet by Thornton by both of them *Where are you going my pretty maid?*

Until a few years ago I had little idea of the number of discs which Caroline actually made. I had a few rather battered discs knowing, however that there were some more out there somewhere, particularly the Pathés. With the valuable assistance of Brian Gould a complete list came to light. Dear Len Watts supplied some of them, the National Sound Archive another and the late Sir Arthur Sullivan the rest. Ron Taylor filled in the Vocalion gap and Brian Gould left me a very rare HMV item.

David Michell made these elderly records sound as I had never heard them before. Through Caroline's previous touring activities she became well known mostly in the North of England, Scotland and Ireland where much of her career was spent with an occasional foray into the South including London, Brighton and Bristol. During her time she performed in over sixty *Messiah* and over twenty *Elijah* presentations. Her repertoire was very extensive with over sixty composer's works to her credit.

Soon after the outbreak of the first war her oratorio work began in earnest. One of her first outings in this genre was *The Creation* with Robert Radford in Nottingham. Her drastically cut *With Verdure Clad*, her only oratorio record was played.

The bass and baritone Norman Allin and Harold Williams were great favourites of Caroline's. The former I met once in the early forties, however 'Uncle' Harold was the archetype uncle who used to be portrayed in boys magazines of the twenties and thirties, tall, rugged looking, and not, as some elders, condescending. After leaving these shores he returned to his native Australia where he became Professor of Singing in Sydney. *Sound the Trumpet* shows them in cracking form.

Another tenor, Frank Mullings was a soloist with Caroline, notably in Elgar's *Spirit of England* soon after the work's first performance. He was a very fine Tristan; other works in which he collaborated with Caroline were by Handel, Stanford, Gounod and Coleridge Taylor. *Comfort ye* shows his remarkable diction, not uncommon at the time.

Muriel Brunskill with her family lived for a few years in our house in the top part. She was known to me as Aunt Muriel, but notwithstanding she did not approve of my noisiness and habit of sliding down the bannisters. She appeared now and then with Mother and here she is in 'Big Band Handel' as dispensed by Beecham *Thou that Tellest Good Tidings to Zion*.

Thorpe Bates shared Parry's *War and Peace* and the *Elijah* on more than one occasion sings a well high miraculous Floral Dance which is my favourite version, note the manner in which he gets his tongue round the catalogue of instruments.

In the dreadful winter of 1946-47 I was in a military hospital with a tropical fever left over from long service in hot stations. A peppery colonel occupied the next bed. He was not very forthcoming to me, a lowly lieutenant. On one of Mother's visits a very petite dark late



middle aged lady in a politically-incorrect fur coat and hat was with this colonel and his wife. Mother in similar attire, sweeping into the ward recognised this lady at the same instant as she her. She was Margaret Balfour a very great friend and colleague from the distant past. The colonel, his wife and myself took no further part in the proceedings for at least an hour when I was flung a bunch of grapes when they were all thrown out by a fierce Sister. Needless to say the colonel's attitude towards me became much more matey than before. I chose next Margaret Balfour singing *The Sands of Dee*.

At one time there were a number of musicians, mostly singers who lived in our immediate neighbourhood, a soprano, contralto, tenor and baritone; a vocal quartet in fact. A composer, violinist and conductor were also among them. Why this should have been is unknown, maybe the proximity to the centre of London. Currently the tradition remains with a brace of pianists and a singer. One of the quartet was Walter Widdop who appeared with Caroline. His contribution to this story is *Sound an Alarm*.

As mentioned, my Mother was one of five daughters, four of which had above average musical ability: a pianist, violinist and two sopranos. One of the singers, apart from Caroline was Isabel who was in the chorus of Beecham's Opera Company. He tried to persuade her to make a career of music but she preferred instead a quiet family life. She did however appear at least once in National Sunday League Concerts with Mother and Harry Dearth conducted by Beecham. There was no history of any serious music ability in the family and apart from one son the gift did not appear in any of the subsequent children.

Being a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music Mother used to attend end of year Prize Giving Concerts at the RAM. Once she took my wife along when a very 'large lady appeared from behind a pillar and with wild shrieks clasped Mother to her ample bosom. She was a figure from the past although I have found no evidence of she and Eva Turner, who it was, performing together. In memory of the occasion I played *Goodbye* by Tosti.

The baritone of our local quartet was Roy Henderson who I knew most of all the artists in this programme. We used to chat about cricket and fishing, his favourite subjects apart from music. He was a very fine vocal actor in opera particularly. Shortly before her death, Caroline and I were at a party at his house opposite; on leaving he showed us his studio, proudly demonstrating his latest gadget, a closed circuit. television outfit. This, he explained was indicate to his students their faults if any in their technique etc. Caroline's comment with a twinkle. "Very nice dear, but would not a large mirror do just as well... and cheaper too." Here now is Roy Henderson in full flight as the seemingly aggrieved Count in Act III of *Figaro* singing *Vedro mentr'io sospiro*.

Rather a sad story of a singer with huge potential and promise who forgot how to sing. John Fullard was an Academy student in the mid-thirties. A tenor from Wales with a tremendous ringing tone with sensitivity to go with it. He won nearly every singing prize going and was highly commended in those he did not. The war put an end to a full engagement book with festivals all over the country. In 1939 he and his wife went to Australia with the Carl Rosa Opera Co. where he soon became a household name on the Australian Radio throughout the war period. Very soon after his return to England he woke up one day to find that his voice had vanished. Mother and his

wife worked daily with him attempting to regain his voice. But after several weeks little progress was made although from time to time there were positive signs of the status quo. Reluctantly he had to give up the idea and went into market gardening instead. His only record *Then shall the Righteous* was now played.

The last operatic performance of Caroline's was in concert form at the hall of the Royal College of Music in 1929. Handel's *Il Pensiero*, which brings us to the last disc - *Sweet Bird*, a cut version due to the format used.

I shall close with the last word from the Music Critic of the Manchester Guardian, Samuel Langford. no relation, I hasten to add, dated 23rd December 1926.

"It was one of those fortunate evenings when we may think the voice of Miss Caroline Hatchard, the only soprano voice in England. Her voice, unequalled in its full and natural range, tender and womanly, and in the purity of its vowels, a model even to her gifted colleagues, was as tuneable as it was delightful in every other way. Her singing of the Christmas recitatives was perfect, both in taste and execution. May we often hear her sing in a like way."

1. Caroline Hatchard. *The Pipes of Pan*. (Monckton) Pathe 78534 mx 50476.
2. Melba, McCormack & Sammarco. *Finale, Faust*. (Gounod). ATL 4078.
3. Ben Davies. *From Love's sickness to fly*. (Purcell) HMV E313 mx B63260 5-2829.
4. Walter Hyde. *Legend of Kleinsack. Tales of Hoffman*. (Offenbach) HMV D106 mx02256.

5. Caroline Hatchard. *Doll Song, Tales of Hoffman*. (Offenbach) Romophone Cc. 03919 mx 4340f.
6. Robert Radford & Edna Thornton. *Where are you going, my pretty maid?* HMV2-4134
7. Caroline Hatchard. *With Verdure clad. Creation*, (Haydn). Vocalion A0154 mx01573.
8. Norman Allin & Harold Williams. *Sound the Trumpet*. (Purcell) Col.L352 mx WA8748.
9. Frank Mullings. *Comfort Ye. Messiah*. (Handel) Col.452 mx 751891.
10. Muriel Brunskill. *O Thou who tellest Good Tidings to Zion. Messiah* (Handel).
11. Thorpe Bates. *The Floral Dance* (Moss). Col.D1394.
12. Margaret Balfour. *The Sands o' Dee*. Vocalion D-02098 mx03063.
13. Walter Widdop. *Sound an Alarm. Judas Maccabeaus*. (Handel) HMV D1886 mx Ccl5578.
14. Eva Turner. *Goodbye* (Tosti) Col.L1827 mxWBx54.
15. Roy Henderson. *Vedro mentr'io sospiro. Figaro Act III* (Mozart). HMV Mozart Soc.
16. John Fullard. *If with all your hearts. Elijah*. (Mendelssohn). Regal Zonophone MR3237.
17. Caroline Hatchard. *Sweet Bird. li Pensiero* (Handel) Vocalion A—116 mx 01871.



# CAROLINE HATCHARD DISCOGRAPHY

**PATHE FRERES, LONDON (11½" etched label, centre start)**

	<b>Cat. No.</b>	<b>Recording Date</b>	<b>Matrix No.</b>	<b>O/S No.</b>
1.	843	<i>I wish I were a tiny bird</i> (Lohr) June, 1909	78531	
2.	843	<i>A bowl of roses</i> (Clarke) June, 1909	76532	
3.	844	<i>THE ARCADIANS: The Pipes of Pan</i> (Monckton & Talbot) June, 1909	78534	204006
4.	844	<i>THE ARCADIANS: Light is my heart</i> (Monckton & Talbot) June, 1909	78535	
5.	5003	<i>A Birthday Song</i> (Clarke) June, 1909	78533	
6.	5003	<i>Goodbye</i> (Tosti) June, 1909	78536	
Nos 5 & 6 reissued on 12" edge start 5727 Also reissued on 12" edge start 20404				
7.	220	<i>PATIENCE: Love is a Plaintive Song</i> (Gilbert & Sullivan) July, 1911	79067	
8.	220	<i>PIRATES OF F'ENZANCE: Poor Wand'ring One</i> (Gilbert & Sullivan) July, 1911	79068	
9.	681	<i>Orpheus with his lute</i> (Sullivan) December, 1911	79069.	
10.	681	<i>THE MIKADO: The Sun whose rays</i> (Gilbert & Sullivan) December, 1911	79070	

**THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LTD., London Recorded in Gramophone Company Studios, Thomas Beecham, conductor**

	<b>Matrix No.</b>	<b>Recording Date</b>	<b>Cat.No.</b>
11.	4340f	THE TALES OF HOFFMANN: The Doll Song (Offenbach) July 27, 1910	03193, SH100 (LP)
12.	4343f	THE TALES OF HOFFMANN: You've Pledged Your Word (Offenbach) with Edith Evans, Frederick Ralow July 27, 1910	unpublished
13.	4344f	THE TALES OF HOFFMANN: You've Pledged Your Word (Offenbach) with Edith Evans, Frederick Ralow July 27, 1910	04069*
14.	4349f	DIE FLEDERMAUS: A Man Like You w. Chorus (Strauss) July 22, 1910	03192*

\*Assigned numbers but never issued

15.	4350f	DIE FLEDERMAUS: A Man Like You w. Chorus (Strauss) July 22, 1910	unpublished
16.	4351f	THE TALES OF HOFFMANN: The Doll's Song (Offenbach) July 28, 1910	unpublished
17.	4352f	THE TALES OF HOFFMANN: The Doll's Song (Of fenbach) July 29, 1910	unpublished
16.	Ab 14553a	The Beautiful Land of Nod (Lehmann) November 28, 1911	GC 3902

**AEOLIAN-VOCALION (12") with Aeolian Orchestra**

	<b>Matrix No.</b>	<b>Recording Date</b>	<b>s/s Pink</b>	<b>s/s Red</b>	<b>d/s Green</b>
19.	01242	LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR: 11 dolce suono (Donizetti) with C. Stainer, flute obbligato January, 1921	A-0107	C-01057	
20.	01296	Se Saran Rose (Arditi) January, 1921	A-0108	C-01058	
21.	01871	L'ALLEGRO ED IL PENSIEROSO: Sweet Bird (Handel) with C. Stainer, flute obbligato January, 1921	A-0116	0-01063	



22.		LAKME: <i>Ou va la jeune Hindoue?</i> (Delibes)		
	01669	February, 1921	A-0121	O-01066
23.		ERNANI: <i>Ernani, involami</i> (Verdi)		
	01575	1921	A-0145	C-01066
24.		THE CREATION: <i>With Verdure Clad</i> (Haydn)		
	01573	September, 1921	A-0154	C-01072
25.		MIGNON: <i>Je suis Titania</i> (Thomas)		
	01226	February, 1922	A-0172	C-01077
26.		TOM JONES: <i>The Waltz Song</i> (German)		
	01464	December, 1922	C-01086	J04111
27.		DINORAH: <i>Ombra leggiera</i> (Meyerbeer)		
	01629	December, 1923	C-01096	J04111

### Notes:

2 & 3. THE ARCADIANs - This "fantastic musical play" opened at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London, on 28th April, 1909 with Florence Smithson as Sombra. Less than two months later, Caroline recorded *The Pipes of Pan*, Sombra's Act I song extolling the beauties of Arcadia and *Light is my heart* another of Sombra's songs which was part of the original production but changed to *Come Back to Arcady* at a later date.

7. PATIENCE: *Love is a Plaintive Song* - is the earliest recording of this song and also the only 78 rpm recording of this song outside the complete opera sets (HMV/Victor) PATIENCE 1922 and 1930

9. *Orpheus with his Lute* - would appear to be the first recording of this song.

11. In the CONTEs D'HOFFMANN *Doll song*, history was well served through the use, for the first time, of a sound effect to simulate the winding of the doll's mechanism.

12 & 13. It is shame we cannot experience Caroline reacting to others as these discs are apparently lost and gone forever.

### AVAILABILITY OF RECORDINGS:

Nos. 6, 11 and 24 are available on AH-21 audio cassette entitled *NOTABLE BRITISH SOPRANOS AND CONTRALTOS* from Adlonni Audio Tapes, Bryn Goleu, Plaswyn, Pwllheli, Wales, LL53 6UT, UK. AH-21 also includes records by Elizabeth Dews, Carrie Tubb, Phyllis Lett, Edna Thornton, Margaret Balfour and Alice Lakin.

# OBITUARIES

## STUART UPTON

I am sure that many of our members will be sorry to hear of the death recently of Stuart Upton, reported briefly in the last issue of *Hillandale News*. He was aged 70. My earliest contact with him was when he was producing a magazine for the Commodore Society in the Spring of 1971, a successor to the Mascotte Society journal. This helped to bring together those described as interested in "general light music of a traditional kind on 78 records", and meetings were held monthly on Saturday evenings at his Purley house and later at West Wickham.

In support of the society's title its presidents were Joseph Muscant, director of the pre-war Commodore Grand Orchestra of Hammersmith, and Arthur Anton, leader of the Paramount Theatre Orchestra from Tottenham Court Road. The Commodore Society changed its name after several years to The Vintage Light Music Society from the winter of 1975, and after the deaths of Joseph Muscant and Arthur Anton Sir Vivian Dunn, Director of Music to the Royal Marines for many years accepted the presidency.

Stuart Upton and his wife June travelled far in the British Isles in pursuit of good light music, often devoting their summer holidays to Scarborough or Bridlington, where Max Jaffa and his colleagues gave two performances daily, while closer at hand he or dedicated supporters would give accounts of the music on the summer bandstands of - London parks, and in the Society's name would demand more light music from BBC radio.

His often trenchant editorials enlivened the first page of some of the quarterly V.L.M.S. journals, and a small number of regular contributors wrote about the lives of players and composers of light music. It was all very much part of a personal enterprise, and that was the way that we liked it. Tapes of vintage recordings were compiled, followed then by audio cassettes, then LPs and CDs were well supported by the membership who could tune their ears to long-ago acoustically recorded sounds from seashores and bandstands. All were enhanced by biographical and discographical material, often obscure but well-researched.

Now that he has gone it is inevitable that much of the knowledge of the fabric of light musical life in Victorian and Edwardian times will be lost. True, there are 15 Commodore and 93 V.L.M.S. Journals on the shelves to refer to, but what has been committed to memory in this field is now irretrievable.

Stuart is greatly missed and we send condolences to June, his wife, supporter and amanuensis, and all of us who have enjoyed his friendship will miss those annual London gatherings of admirers of light music every autumn.

**George Frow**



## SIDNEY GEORGE OVERSTALL

George Overstall of Puriton, Somerset died peacefully in Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton on the 1st of February 1998 aged 86.

George was known to so many of us as a wise old gramophone man, whose wide knowledge of both music and the acoustic gramophone stretched over more than 70 years. His skill as an amateur engineer produced some of the finest acoustic gramophones and his replicated EMG sound boxes were perfection and a joy to listen to. Some have been used by the Nimbus Record Company to produce their Prima Voce CD's. He spent the whole of his working life in the tool industry including a reserved occupation during the war. His workshop in Puriton was a joy to behold. Sadly in December 1996, due to failing health, he could no longer manage on his own and was forced to leave his cottage at very short notice and go into a local nursing home. Much of his workshop and library were regretfully 'lost' during house clearance but fortunately I was able to rescue the giant gramophone (featured in this journal some years ago) together with a number of sound boxes and some of the dies and materials used to produce EMG diaphragms and other components. George was so happy in his last year knowing that these items had been saved.

I haven't yet had the heart to play his gramophone as I know it will remind me of the many lovely evenings I spent with him in his cottage; and certain pieces of his favourite music will always now be 'associated' in my mind with George.

His funeral was attended by his two sons, one now living in British Columbia, and by a number of his gramophone friends in Somerset.

**Phillip Lewis**

### FORTHCOMING MEETINGS IN LONDON

Due to reconstruction work at the Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church we shall be meeting at **7pm** in the Wynter Room at the **Swedenborg Society, Swedenborg House, 20-21 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2TH** during the months of February, March, April, May, June, July and September 1998.

**July 21st**  
**August 18th**

Allan Palmer will give a talk on *Ballads by Women*  
Frank Andrews Presents will take place at the Methodist Church Centre, Neasden. See enclosed flysheet for directions on how to get there.

**September 15th**  
**October 20th**

Members Night  
Paul Morris in *Edison's Gems* live on Edison phonograph.

## REVIEW



**Gramophone – The First 75 Years compiled by Anthony Pollard, ISBN 0 902470 99X. Published by Gramophone Publications Ltd., 135 Greenford Road, Sudbury Hill, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 3 YD, Price £29.95**

The *Gramophone* magazine was founded in 1923 by Compton Mackenzie and his brother-in-law, Christopher Stone. It was the first magazine devoted to the review of gramophone records. After 75 years of continuous publication and the emergence of several competitors *Gramophone* is still one of the leading record review magazines in the world.

Anthony Pollard, the Chairman of Gramophone Publications Ltd., the owner and publishers of *Gramophone* has compiled this book to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the magazine.

The life of *Gramophone* is divided into eight chapters covering the periods 1922-1928, 1929-1938, 1939-1949, 1950-1957, 1958-1969, 1970-1979, 1980-1989 and 1990-1998. In these Anthony Pollard tells the history of the magazine and how it kept abreast of all the changes in the recording industry. It is a fascinating story. We learn how the magazine has grown from its inception in Compton Mackenzie's home on the island of Jethou in the Channel Islands to the opening of offices in London right through several changes in abode ranging from Cecil Pollard's homes in suburbia to the current base in Harrow.

Cecil Pollard, Anthony's father joined Gramophone Publications Ltd. in 1926 as Business Manager. Anthony joined the firm in 1946 and his son Christopher joined the business in 1977, thus maintaining a family connection, which spans three generations.

The scope of this book is enormous and there is so much information made available that I can only cover some items, which particularly caught my attention.

One of the main sources of income for any magazine is advertising and right from the start *Gramophone* was supported by advertisements from Columbia, HMV, Regal, Zonophone and Vocalion. Several of the independent equipment manufacturers, such as EMG, E. M. Ginn & Orchorsol also advertised. From their entry into the record market in September 1929 Decca advertised in the magazine. Many of these old advertisements are reproduced in the book giving readers, like myself, who were not around in the early days an excellent insight to the record industry of that time.

Another item, which caught my eye, was the section dealing with the problems of the magazine at the beginning of the last war. The directors took a 50% pay cut in September 1939. (How many directors would, I wonder, do the same today to save their firms?) The circulation had reached 5,600 per month by 1940. War conditions resulted in retailers like Imhofs and most of the gramophone and radio manufacturers dropping their advertising support. This, along with the restrictions in the supply of paper, caused the directors to reduce the size of *Gramophone* to 32 pages. Further reductions were made as the supply of paper was reduced.



Up to January 1940 newspapers and magazines were sold on a 'sale or return' basis. That month a government order required all such goods to be sold on a 'firm sale' basis with no returns. One of the effects of this was that the publishers had a firmer control over their sales and in some cases profitability increased.

Purchase tax was introduced on gramophone records in October 1940. Right from the start *Gramophone* campaigned against this tax and they maintained their opposition to it for many years. At its peak in 1943 the rate of tax was 100%. The tax remained at various rates until it was replaced by VAT when this country joined the European Community in 1975.

All the major technological developments in the record industry are covered in this book. The introduction of electrical recording in 1925, the introduction of the 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  rpm LP in 1948, the introduction of the 7" 45rpm record in 1949, the introduction of stereo LPs in 1958, the introduction of musicassettes in 1966, the introduction of quadraphonic LPs in 1972, the introduction of digitally recorded LPs in 1979 and the introduction of CDs in 1983.

In the section covering records and reviews the rise of the independent labels like Chandos, Conifer, Hyperion, Naxos, Nimbus and Telarc is fully detailed. The reader is reminded that one of the major record companies, EMI Ltd., were later than their major rivals in embracing the LP and repeated the same mistake when CD was introduced into Europe. This section also covers the rising importance of popular music in the economics of the record industry. Details of the early reviewers like W. R. Anderson, and W. H. Chislett, to name but two, are given with extracts from some of their reviews.

In the section covering recording equipment the acoustical recording system is described along with later developments including electrical recording, magnetic tape {covering reel-to-reel, the Philips compact cassette, the Garrard Tape System (who remembers that now?), DAT (Digital Audio tape), DCC (Digital Compact Cassette)} and Mini-Disc.

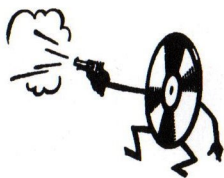
Much of the book has been written by Anthony Pollard himself, but he has called on several colleagues, such as his son Christopher, John Borwick, Lionel Salter (the magazine's longest serving reviewer) and James Jolly (the current editor) to write sections he felt were more appropriately covered by them.

I have few criticisms to make of this book but one error glaringly stands out to machine collectors like myself. On page 27 there is a picture of Compton Mackenzie, dressed in his kilt, standing beside a gramophone described as his 'Balmain gramophone'. The machine in the photograph is quite obviously an E. M. Ginn Expert 'Senior'. To my knowledge Balmain was a designer of a horn as shown on page 214 of the book and did not manufacture gramophones.

This is a large book 9½ inches by 11¼ inches by 7⁄8 inches and comprises 272 pages. It is well produced in quality art paper with loads of illustrations, photographs (many in colour) and excerpts and advertisements from various issues of *Gramophone* magazine. I can thoroughly recommend this book as an enjoyable read and a fund of useful information. It should be on all collectors' bookshelves and will remain a valuable reference book for many years to come. It is extremely good value and is available from any good bookshop for **£29.95** or from the publishers direct at **£34.00** including postage.

**Chris Hamilton**

## REVIEWS



**Enrico Caruso in Song Volume 2 -  
Nimbus NI 7884**

**Alexander Kipnis - Nimbus NI 7885/6**

**Richard Crooks - Nimbus NI 7888**

**Miguel Fleta - Nimbus NI 7889**

**Lawrence Tibbett - Delos DE 5500 }**

**Richard Crooks - Delos DE 5501 }**

**Richard Bonelli - Delos DE 5502 }**

The Nimbus company whose products I have reviewed on many previous occasions has been busy with a whole clutch of new releases over the past few months. Earlier this year, in these columns I reviewed - among others - Nimbus CDs of Manan Anderson and Wilhelm Herold.

The first of the discs under review this time is volume two of Enrico Caruso in Song. This obviously complements the company's volume one in the same series, but does bring together some of the more essentially Neapolitan songs recorded by the great tenor. While volume one included such standards as *Because*, *Santa Lucia*, *O Sole Mio* and even *Over There* and *Ombra mai fu*, the second volume features a number of lesser known titles, while still including Caruso standards like the old Tosti warhorses *Addio* and *A vucchella*, which I first came to know because it was on side two of the first Caruso record I ever possessed: a battered copy of DA 103 picked up in a junk-shop in 1963! But there are titles a-plenty of the sort of songs that formed the back-bone of Neapolitan popular music in the decades on either side of the turn of the century.

Sloppy and sentimental they may be, but these songs are handled with the same sort of care - almost reverence - that Caruso reserved for the greatest operatic arias. The tracks are recorded using the now familiar Ambisonic system to transfer from the originals via a large horn gramophone. On one or two of the earlier tracks I found the echo rather intrusive. But the same cannot be said for the second of the CDs under review. It is in fact a two-record set featuring the magnificent bass voice of *Alexander Kipnis in Opera and Lieder*. The recordings date from 1922 to 1939 and show this singer at the height of his powers with a range of items: the first disc is all operatic arias, the majority of the tracks on the second disc show Kipnis the lieder singer, unparalleled in songs by Schubert, Schumann and Brahms.

The well-detailed sleeve notes are by the singer's son, the harpsichordist Igor Kipnis, who points out that although his father was often thought to be German, he was in fact born in a Jewish ghetto in the Ukraine! There are 33 tracks on the two discs and although I am not really a fan of lieder, if I had to pick a track it would probably be the oft-mistreated *Erkönig*, by Schubert to the words of Goethe. Not only is the 1939 Victor recording a model of lieder singing, it also has enough chill to make the hair stand up on the back of your neck!

For many people, the name of the Spanish tenor Miguel Fleta is probably associated with no more than a handful of titles, the most familiar of which is the popular song *Ay, ay*, by the Chilean composer Freire. The record achieved phenomenal sales and copies still turn up regularly, giving the impression that Fleta was a one-song, or at least one-record singer. I was pleased therefore to see that *Ay, ay*, *ay* does NOT appear on this Nimbus compilation which includes 20 tracks, all



crossing the acoustic/electric divide. They range from an emotional and somewhat over-embellished *E lucevan le stelle* of 1922 to some spirited 1927 recordings of several Spanish items with which Fleta - understandably - seems more at home. But of particular note there is from the same year- 1927 - a stately version of Meyerbeer's *O paradiso* taken though at a slower pace than usual. This also suffers from the Fleta wobble which became more noticeable on his later recordings. All in all though, this is a worthy tribute to a fine singer, who is too often over-looked these days or regarded as just another tenor of the post-Caruso generation. Technically though it must be stated though that on this disc, the Nimbus Ambisonic system on occasions does seem to emphasise rather than improve the inherent "boxiness" of some of the Spanish electrical recordings.

From the rarefied atmosphere of Kipnis and German lieder and the Italian, German and Spanish opera of Fleta, to a singer who is best known for his lighter repertoire. In the 30s it is a fair bet there were few record collections which did not include the voice of the American tenor Richard Crooks. Recording star, concert performer and broadcaster he was probably second only to Count John McCormack in his following .. and like that great Irish tenor he successfully mixed popular ballad with opera. But where McCormack's songs had a definite "Ould Oirland" slant, Crooks was renowned as an interpreter of the songs of Stephen Foster .. in fact ten of the 23 tracks on this record of Richard Crooks in Song and Ballads are of Foster songs. Although there are no operatic recordings of Crooks on this Nimbus disc, you will find more serious items including Schubert's *Serenade* D957, No 4; Grieg's *A Dream* and *Songs my mother taught me* by Dvorák.

Now to the issues from the US company Delos, whose products are handled in Britain by Nimbus ... and I can assure you that there ARE plenty of Richard Crooks' operatic recordings on Delos DE 5501, which is a double CD album devoted to the American tenor. It's one of the new Stanford Archive series for which the record-collecting world owes a debt of gratitude to William R. Moran. He is former vice president of a major United States company and the founder and honorary curator of the Stanford Archive of Recorded Sound. But he would appear to be no dilettante: he is co-compiler of *The Encyclopedic Discography of Victor Recordings*, editor and compiler of *Herman Klein and the Gramophone* and author of *Melba, a contemporary review*, *The Recordings of Lilian Nordica* and the discographies of more than two dozen singers. So this man obviously knows his stuff!

Much of the material on the discs has never seen the light of day in this country.. or any country for that matters. Much of the first CD is devoted to Schubert's song cycle *Die Schöne Müllerin*, recorded in 1933, but issued only in 1941, and then only in part! The remainder of disc one and the whole of disc two is devoted to a mixture of light and serious, sacred and secular, operatic and popular, many of which are Victor recordings which were either unpublished or issued only in certain countries. There are also tracks taken from radio broadcasts - including two duets with Bing Crosby!, There are private "takes" include Crooks' last recordings made at a wedding ceremony in 1967 when, despite being two years past pensionable age, his voice was still in remarkable condition.

If any one doubts Crooks' operatic credentials, just listen to his 1926 recording of the Prize Song from *Meistersinger*, issued in 1926 in

which his voice takes on a heavier, almost heldentenor tone, so different from the light, lyric Crooks tone on some other tracks. The two CDs total 54 tracks in 150 minutes and the detailed accompanying leaflet includes full recording information plus many fascinating photographs. The singer's widow and family assisted in the production of this issue.

In the same Stanford Archive series come two other double CD issues: they feature baritones Lawrence Tibbett and Richard Bonelli. Tibbett is of course better-known to us on this side of the Atlantic, but although the titles will be familiar, the "takes" will not be. Many of the items come from radio broadcasts or from discs specially cut for two of Tibbett's films: *Metropolitan* of October 1935 and *Under your spell* of November 1936. When will they be shown on television by some of our more adventurous stations? (BBC 2 and Channel 4, please note!)

Among the wealth of familiar Tibbett items: *Largo al factotum*, *Il balen*, *De Glory Road* et al, there are some real gems: private records made by Tibbett as musical Christmas or New Year greetings; and a war relief concert broadcast made in 1941 of *Finland's Song* by a quartet comprising Tibbett, Kirsten Flagstad, Lauritz Melchior and Karmn Branzell, with an orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens! The accompanying booklet includes a "race" health warning which explains that some of the selections contain lyrics which are considered racist today. However it says they have been included to give a full picture of the standard repertoire and that of Tibbett himself.

The final issue under review is a double CD of Richard Bonelli (né Bunn) (1889-1980), a singer of whom I had heard but with whose voice I was not familiar. According to the

enclosed booklet, Bonelli never found much time for making commercial records although he was featured by US Vocalion, Brunswick, Columbia and latterly MGM. All recordings on the first CD come from live broadcast performances preserved originally on aluminium or acetate discs and much of the second CD is devoted to a concert at Town Hall, New York which Bonelli arranged to be recorded personally at his own expense. The recordings show what the experts refer to as a well-schooled voice. Considering the people with whom he sang in his career it is surprising Bonelli is not better known in this country: among those with whom he sang major roles were Schipa, Louise Homer, Journet, Muzio, Cortis, Kipnis, Dal Monte, Ponselle, Scotti, LauriVolpi, Pons, Gigli, Meichior, Pinza, Bori and Crooks. Enough to be going on with? Perhaps this Stanford Archive issue will start a move to rectify years of neglect and introduce a fine singer to more people in this country.

**Colin Johnson**

## **REGIONAL GROUP SECRETARIES**

### **Clockwork Music Group**

H. P. Bailey, [REDACTED]  
Tyne and Wear NE1 6 4ES

### **Midlands Group**

Phil Bennett, [REDACTED] Whitmore  
Reans, Wolverhampton WV6 0JW. Tel: [REDACTED]

### **Northern Group**

Ann Mallinson, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Barrow, Cumbria LA13 0HO  
Tel: [REDACTED]

### **West of England Group**

Paul Morris, [REDACTED] Exeter,  
Devon EX4 4HE. Tel: [REDACTED]



**ARTHUR PRYOR**  
**TROMBONE SOLOIST**  
**of the Sousa Band**

**Arthur Pryor, Trombone Soloist of the  
Sousa Band published by Crystal  
Records, 28818 NE Hancock, Camas  
WA 98607, U.S.A. CD451, Full Price**

This CD comes from the same stable as the Herbert L. Clarke CD I reviewed the October 1997 issue of *Hillandale News*.

I have owned a few 78s of the Arthur Pryor Band for some years but I knew little of his background and did not know that he was the trombone soloist in the Sousa Band.

Pryor was born in 1870 and died in 1942. His father was bandmaster of the town of St. Joseph, Missouri. His elder brother Walter was a cornetist and was featured on many of the recordings of Herbert L. Clarke. After a tramp had left his old battered trombone with Arthur's father Sam as payment of a debt Arthur became fascinated with the instrument and learned to play it. He practised for up to 10 hours a day! He had a spell directing the Stanley Opera Opera Company in Denver. He joined Sousa's band in 1892 and played his first solo with them in 1893 at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago. He was assistant conductor of the Sousa Band from 1895-1905.

It turns out that many of the Sousa band recordings were conducted by Arthur Pryor. He left Sousa to form his own band in 1903. The Arthur Pryor Band gave their first concert on 15th November 1903 in the Majestic Theatre, New York. The band went into radio broadcasting in the 1920s and Arthur eventually retired in 1933.

The recordings chosen for this CD all show Arthur Pryor to be an excellent performer and a musician of skill and taste. My favourite tracks are: *Bluebells of Scotland*, *We Won't Go Home Until Morning*, *Parisian Melodies* (one of Pryor's own arrangements), *Message of the Violet* from "The Prince of Pilsen", *Love's Enchantment*, *Congo Love Song* from "Nancy Brown", *The Low Back'd Car*, *Navajo*, *Oh, Dry Those Tears* and *Polka Fantastic* (another of Pryor's own compositions). There is not a dud amongst the 26 tracks on this CD. In *We Won't Go Home Until Morning* Arthur Pryor's trombone playing covers an extraordinary 4 octaves! This track has to be heard to be believed. The recording dates of these tracks date cover the years 1901 to 1911.

The transfers are first rate. They were done by Seth B. Winner, one of the leading experts in this field. Seth B. Winner has managed, with the aid of computer techniques, to substantially reduce the surface noise without cutting off the higher frequencies too much. This has resulted in remarkably lifelike recordings.

I can thoroughly recommend this CD to our readers and it should give them hours of enjoyable listening. Crystal Records have now got a U.K. distributor and this CD should be available from any reputable record dealer. It is in the full-price range (around £14).

**Chris Hamilton**

## LETTERS



### Sterno etc.

Dear Editor,

I much approve of the new format of *Hillandale News*. As you say, quarterly publication will provide you with more time for the production of each edition.

In the correspondence about "4-in-1" records no one mentioned that this close-groove technique was also employed by the British Homophone Co. on some of their Sterno issues. I have a 10" Sterno, catalogue number 5008, of recordings by the Joseph Lewis Orchestra playing two of Herman Finck's potpourris which play for about six minutes each. The sound quality is little different from that obtained from standard Sterno records.

On a different subject, I wonder why producers of period TV dramas, who meticulously create appropriate ambience so often go to pieces when a "wind-up" gramophone appears? A recent unmemorable early 1920s piece showed the latest dance hit emanating from a 1930 style 12" classical red label HMV record. Another WW2 drama employed a portable gramophone playing a 10" orange label Broadcast Twelve Super dance record. The fault was that the tune heard was not written until after the label became defunct.

My enclosed illustration illustrates a blunder spotted in another programme. If played like this, records would certainly acquire a "cracking sound"! I wonder if EMI approved the use of their HMV logo by the company who advertised this machine in their catalogue.

Yours sincerely,  
Alan Sheppard, Alfriston, East Sussex.



### Dennis Noble

Dear Chris,

wonder if you can be of help in a small way with my biography of Dennis Noble? I have been trying to tie up a few loose ends one which concerns on aspect of his personal life. I understand he married the radio actress/singer Miriam Ferris, probably in the mid to late thirties and they remained married until Miriam's death. I would greatly appreciate if someone could verify those facts. In particular, I'd like to know when they married and when she died.

I would also be glad to hear from anyone who collects Dennis Noble records to help validate his discography.

Many thanks,  
Charles Hooey [REDACTED] Winnipeg,



Canada R3G 2R4

## Clarice Vance

Dear Chris,

I am wondering if you have knowledge of 27 week engagement at the London Palace of Varieties that was a triumph for American vaudevillian, Clarice Vance in 1909.

I am her unofficial biographer and am trying to fill in the career gaps in this once beloved performer.

Clarice seems to be totally forgotten in the annals of American show biz. At the turn of the century she was in full swing over here with appearances in all the major cities. She recorded for Victor from 1906 - 1909 and very successfully too. Her salary was \$750 a week in 1909 after her London engagement. She was married in 1904 to Moses Gumble, song writer and manager of Remik Music Publishing. They divorced in 1914.

Through very chance series of events was discovered that she died in a Napa, CA Insane asylum in 1961 at the age of 90 or 91 Her body was unclaimed by friends or family. All that was known was that her name was Clarice Vance and that she claimed she was an actress. The hospital supervisor contacted a theatrical archivist who verified that Miss Vance had been a star in her day.

She was buried as #31 in a pauper's grave near Napa.

Her records are unique as you recall and I am wondering if all her American discs were issued in Europe. She made two Edison two minute cylinders in 1905.

To date, nobody has been able to learn what she did from 1919 to 1951 when she was

commuted to this mental institution in an 'advanced state of dementia'. However, this London connection is intriguing. Her last appearance at the Tivoli in San Francisco carried the announcement that "Clarice Vance, the Southern Singer, late of the Palace in London" will be the guest artist..."

Do you or any of your record collector friends have any information regarding this woman? It is interesting to note that her ex-husband in the early 40's had no idea where she was.

Sorry if this inquiry is a bit abrupt but it is worth a shot,

Regards,

Sterling Morris, [REDACTED]

{If you are not on the internet send your replies to me and I'll forward them. Ed.}

## Help Please

Dear Chris,

I understand a recording was made of Big Ben ringing in the new century in 1900. Can any one tell me if that recording is available? I have a vague memory of it being issued on an LP with a title of Sounds of the Century, or something like that.

I'm trying to help someone from National Public Radio prepare a show for the new century, and he wants something that was recorded at that time. Big Ben was all that I could think of as recorded that particular New Year's Eve.

Thanks for any help,

Aaron Cramer, [REDACTED], Brooklyn, NY 11229, U.S.A.

## Corrigenda

Dear Chris,

Congratulations on the 'new look' publication. The learning-curve obviously posed a few problems but the finished article looks very professional.

The report on my London effort sadly contains a couple of errors: we never published on alternate months and the founding price was 6d - held for the first twelve months when it became 1s. If you could manage a correction it would be appreciated.

Kindest regards,

Anthony Pollard, Gramophone Publications Ltd., Harrow, Middlesex

## Catherine Mentiplay

Dear Chris,

I give all the details I have of the recordings Catherine Mentiplay and Madame Adami on the piano made at the recording session at Hayes on 19th September 1923:

- Bb 3468-1 and -2 -2 issued on 2-3871  
HMV B 1824 Mentiplay solo
- Bb 3469-1 and -2 -1 issued on 2-3870  
HMV B 1824 Mentiplay solo
- Bb 3470-1 Test by Miss Thomson *Oh why left I my hame* (P. MacLeod arr. James T. Smith)
- Bb 3471-1 and -2 -2 issued on 2-3868  
HMV B 1823 Mentiplay solo
- Bb 3472-1 and -2 -2 issued on 2-3869  
HMV B 1823 Mentiplay solo
- Bb 3473 to Bb 3475 by Jack Hylton
- Bb 3476-1 and -2 unissued *O wert thou in the cold blast* (duet)  
(Mendelssohn)
- Bb 3477-1 and -2 -1 issued on 4-4006  
HMV B 1825 duet
- Bb 3478-1 and -2 unissued *Ye banks and*

*braes* (duet) (arr. G.Short)

Bb 3479-1 and -2 -1 issued on 4-4005

HMV B 1825 duet

I also give further information on the recording session of 7th October 1929:

BR 2652-1 and -2 (Leeson not Lesson!)  
unissued

BR 2653-1 and -2 unissued

BR 2654-1 and -2 unissued

BR 2655-1 and -2 unissued

All with T. Paterson Lamb (piano)

I don't know why the details were not locatable at EMI as all were made on the same day. However you now have full details of the missing titles and the Thomson test!

In his letter on Moira Anderson and the reference to Rev. J. R. MacPherson of Kirkintilloch, I wonder if Mr Rankine has any knowledge of Ian B MacPherson, son of the minister and a fellow student at Glasgow too many years ago!

Regards,

Alan Kelly, Sheffield

## Record Speeds

Dear Editor,

Reading Peter Adamson's letter in No 221 about the 8 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm disc for the blind reminds me of a similar 12" vinyl disc I once found. This was marked speed 25rpm and carried the instruction "for use only by the blind". It was a yellow label HMV having the traditional dog logo in the upper semicircle. I never attempted to inlay it, so I don't know what terrible fate may have befallen a sighted person doing so.

What does interest me is the derivation of these unusual speeds. You will notice that 25rpm is



$3 \times 8\frac{1}{3}$  rpm, and that  $8\frac{1}{3}$  rpm is  $\frac{1}{4} \times 33\frac{1}{3}$  (or  $\frac{1}{2} \times 16\frac{2}{3}$  rpm. All these speeds can be got by subdividing 100, or by multiplying  $8\frac{1}{3}$ , so was one or other of these the starting point? Furthermore, can these other speeds be produced easily using contemporary record players, i.e. the four-speed jockey-wheel driven type? The answer would seem to be no. Speeds 78 and 45 are not arithmetically related, so could not be used. Halving the remaining speeds would produce  $16\frac{2}{3}$  ( $\frac{1}{2} \times 33\frac{1}{3}$ ) and  $8\frac{1}{3}$  ( $\frac{1}{2} \times 16\frac{2}{3}$ ). On the other hand, reducing by  $\frac{3}{4}$  would produce 25 ( $\frac{3}{4} \times 33\frac{1}{3}$ ) and  $12\frac{1}{2}$  ( $\frac{3}{4} \times 16\frac{2}{3}$ ). Has anyone further information on these speeds and the players for them?

Yours sincerely,  
Marty Dowell, Southampton

## Virginia Woolf

Dear Chris,  
I am writing an article on Virginia Woolf and the Gramophone and wondered whether you could be of any help. In particular, I should like to identify the sort of gramophone that might have provided the background music for an outdoor pageant, circa 1940, in Woolf's novel, *Between the Acts*. I suspect it might still have been a hand-wound portable model; notably it makes a chuffing noise. Woolf's letters mention a gramophone as early as 1927, when T. S. Eliot apparently brought records of popular dance music to tea at her house. My web browser brought me to the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society, and thence to you. I hope you don't find this inconvenient.

best wishes,  
Bonnie Scott (I'm a professor of English at the University of Delaware), e-mail:  
[redacted]

{If you are not on the internet send your replies to me and I'll pass them on. Ed.}

## U-Phone, Mellophone and Perfecta

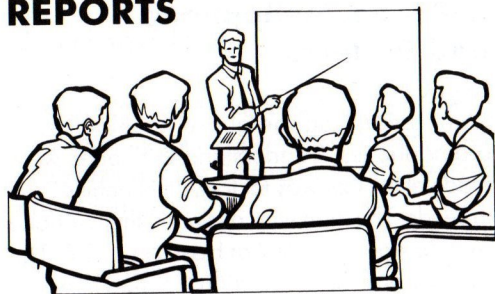
Dear Chris,  
I am researching the above three makes of gramophones. I understand U-Phones were made at the Conway factory, off Harehills Lane in Leeds. The man who designed the U-Phone went to work for HMV at Hayes in 1927. The Mellophone Manufacturing Co. had its works at 193 Sheepscar Street North in Leeds between 1923 and 1937. The firm also had premises at 4 Lands Lane, just below the old Theatre Royal building and may have been agents for Bandmaster Gramophones. I believe they had a shop almost facing the Corn Exchange with an advert on the wall above. My Mellophone cost 18gns in 1927, the year it was made. Perfecta had its works in Kirkstall Road between 1912 and 1915. I believe Perfecta moved to Manchester after 1915.

I'd be grateful for any more information on these firms so that I can complete my researches.

Kind regards,  
Derek Parker, [redacted] Moortown,  
Leeds LS1 5EB.



## REPORTS



### London Meeting, March 17th 1998

Our second London gathering at Swedenborg House drew a keen attendance to welcome Chris Hamilton from north of the Border, in his series *A Further Taste of Scotland*.

His earlier talks have confirmed that Scottish 78 records have a character all to themselves and he has the knack to bring this out. Besides traditional pipe music there are those long-term favourites of accordion lovers, the indomitable Jimmy Shand from Auchtermuchty and Bobby McLeod and his Band, as well as the Kirkintilloch Children's Choir and members off Glasgow Orpheus Choir. Shand, now 90, made his first records in 1933.

Featured on and in a recent *Hillandale News* and previously unknown to most off us was Catherine Mentiplay, and here she is by courtesy of HMV in a song by Charles Macpherson. One whose voice did not become known to southern Britain was tenor Alfred J. Forbes in a *Road to the Isles*, that called for an heroic quality; he was too fast. Scottish humour was provided by William McCulloch and Donald Dallas, but so Scottish was the latter that concentration of the ear was called for.

There were songs from Andrew Black, Annie Tait and Jean Day, and traditional dances to

the fiddle of Alec Sim, who knew the famous Scott Skinner in his later years. Our speaker discussed and played several disc labels that were recorded north of the Border, such as Beltona and Broadcast SC Series, and a charming Great Scott of William Hartley's Tiny Tots Orchestra of young children playing *Melodyland* over two sides. This was quite delightful and presumably how the Japanese learn by the Suzuki method.

The evening closed with a clever piano piece from the (nationalistic) Scottish Covenant Association called *Emigration Rag*, and arranged and played by Freda Leishman, but ne'er a saltire in sight.

A first-class programme contributed to a first-rate evening. Thank you Chris.

### A London Correspondent

### London Meeting, April 21st 1998

A large number of London members turned out on a fine spring evening on 21st April to hear John Passmore's presentation of his favourite Caruso recordings. For the added pleasure of the those members present, John had produced a comprehensive and well researched listing of all the recordings to be played including the matrix and catalogue numbers as well as the recording dates. John explained he has had a passion for Caruso since childhood and this love for the singer came though strongly during during the course of the programme.

The recordings were played in roughly chronological order from date of recording which gave a fine feeling for Caruso's development as a singer between April 1902 (*Questa o Quella* on G & T) and September 1919 (*A Vucchella* on Victor). In between the recordings, John related many anecdotes and



amusing asides relating to Caruso's life both on and off the stage which helped bring the character of the singer to life, but more than this was the sheer power of of Caruso's voice and artistry which rang though on every record no matter how crude the recordings. Many appreciative comments were made over the quality of the transfers which were in many cases truly excellent, giving great clarity to the voices and making one wonder anew what did Geraldine Farrar really sing in her first line of the *Madame Butterfly* duet of 1908 ?"

From the verissimo of *Amor to Vieta* from Fedora of 1902 to the bel canto of Donizetti's *Come Gentil* from Don Pasquale of 1905 to the popular fund raising song *Over There* of 1918 Caruso showed that in the three-quarters of a century since his death there have been few to equal, and even fewer to surpass, his great talent.

The meeting closed with the members enthusiastically showing their appreciation to John for a most enjoyable and illuminating evening.

**Tim Wood-Woolley**

### **Northern Group, March 22nd 1998**

On Sunday the 22nd March, the second day of Spring, with glorious weather 20 Members of the Northern group met for their First Meeting after their Winter break.

Being "Mothers Day", the programme was given to the ladies under the title *Housewives' Choice*, introduced by *In the Party Mood*, the theme music from the Radio Series and then followed with the ladies introducing their favourite records:

<i>A little of what you Fancy</i>	Marie Lloyd
<i>The Lancashire Toreador</i>	George Formby (Junior)
<i>Albert and the lion</i>	Stanley Holloway

<i>We all come From Lancashire</i>	Stanley Kirby
<i>Painting the Clouds with sunshine</i>	A. Berry
	Broadway Boys
<i>Magic Moments</i>	Perry Como
<i>Tammy</i>	Debbie Reynolds
<i>Some Enchanted Evening</i>	Ezio Pinza
<i>Please leave my butter alone</i>	Elsie Carlisle
<i>Good Night Vienna</i>	Jack Buchanan
<i>The Gnu Song</i>	Flanders and Swann
<i>1919 Rag</i>	Kid Ory and His Jazz Band

<i>There's a Mother Always Waiting</i>	Will Oakland
<i>The Holy City/The Lost Chord</i>	Walter Midgley
<i>John Willie's Ragtime Band</i>	George Formby (Senior)
<i>The Song of the Prune</i>	Frank Crumit
<i>Under the Bed</i>	Nellie Wallace
<i>This Nearly was Mine</i>	Ezio Pinza

As we still had a little bit of time to spare before our Afternoon Tea, Miles ended the afternoon with his programme mainly linked to the *Female Performer and Spring Time*:

<i>The Voices of Spring</i>	Erna Sack.
<i>Bless you</i>	The Ink Spots
<i>John Willie's Jazzband</i>	George Formby (Junior)
<i>Bounce the Boogie</i>	Winifred Atwell

Afternoon Tea brought the Meeting to a close.

**Anne Mallinson**

### **West of England Group, March 21st 1998**

On 21st March. around 20 members and friends gathered at the period (1720) home of Bernie Brown and Ann Gunn in the Somerset countryside near Bristol.

The theme was organ music. as Bernie is a former cinema organist from the Thames Valley. He collects and restores player-organs, reed organs, there must have been a dozen I saw, as well as player pianos and gramophones.

The entertainment started with Paul Morris at the wonderful Compton Melotone (originally at the Cameo Theatre, Ventnor) This was a very early electronic organ (mid-1930s), but you could hardly tell its sound from a pipe organ. These pioneer instruments, predating the more famous Hammond, were designed for halls where a pipe organ would have been too big or expensive. Every home should have one. Accomplished Bristol organist George Kent continued, playing requests; "What was that tune" he was asked: "One I made up while deciding what to play next."

As we settled into our seats (from the Regal, Henley), Bernie began his talk with a 2-minute Edison cylinder of *Molinari and his street piano*, played on an Edison Standard phonograph.

Then on a table model HMV 109 Gramophone, we heard records of a Verbeeck fairground organ, and the Wurlitzers at the New Gallery Kinema (London's first - 1925 - and made famous by broadcasts), the Gaumont State and Crystal Palace studios. Next we had a Reginald Foort record of his amazing travelling Moller organ. This had been imported from the USA in 64 crates, and took four furniture vans to transport it around the theatres, taking two days to assemble and take down. Why ever did they?

After the magnificent refreshments, some of us got the urge to sing chorus songs, vigorously accompanied by the two Pauls (Baker and Morris) duetting on piano and organ.

The evening ended with all the CLPGS members recording their voices on a wax cylinder (on the Edison Standard), with clapping, shouts, and party noises. We did enjoy ourselves.

**Paul Collenette**

## **Midlands Group Meeting, Saturday 21st February 1998**

Chairman Eddie Dunn opened the meeting by paying tribute to Leslie Penn. Leslie was a long-standing stalwart of our group, and in his early days could always be relied on to express opinions about the many issues that were raised at our meetings. He never married and lived alone. He was a member of many societies (Victorian Society, Deanna Durbin Society, Black Country Society, Tetrassini Circle, to name a few!). Eddie told us that Leslie was involved in the photographic and jewelry trades in his younger days. Leslie was a man of great courtesy and will be long remembered by all our local members. He was in his late 70s.

The first part of our entertainment was provided by Mick James with a programme called *Saturday Night at the Movies*. This was all on 78s. Mick informed us that sometimes his choice was favourite music from not so favourite films and other times his choice was vice-versa.

The earliest item was the *Dig a Dig* song from the sound track of the 1937 Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Among other blockbusters we heard were Warsaw Concerto from *Dangerous Moonlight* (1941) and *The Dambusters' March* from the film of that name. Mick provided a variety of styles with Ezio Pinza singing from *South Pacific* and the very stirring *Ride of the Valkyries* from the 1979 film *Apocalypse Now*. Other later films he illustrated were *Rock Around the Clock* with Bill Haley and His Comets and the finishing item was Glenn Miller Band playing *Little Brown Jug* from the film *The Glenn Miller Story*.

Most of us are film buffs as well as gramophone addicts, so this programme went down well with everyone.



After the break we were entertained once again by John Stroud with his usual blend of comedy on LP and 78s. He explained that he tried to avoid the more well-known songs and let us hear less popular items.

Among the artists we heard were Leslie Holmes, Robb Wilton, Jack Train, Spike Milligan and Phil Harris. One of the lesser-known songs was *I Pulled Myself Together* sung by Arthur Tracy and another was *We Can't Let You Broadcast That* with Norman Long. A very popular choice was an excerpt of comedy patter by David Gunson, who we have heard before in one of John's previous programmes. Mr Gunson is an air traffic controller at Manchester Airport and he has a gift for relating comic events to do with handling of aircraft.

John completed his programme with an extract from *The Instruments of Torture Song Book* by Midlands artists Dave and Al Seeley (now known nationwide as 'Cosmo Theka').

Once again a comprehensive variety with a lot of fresh material.

**Geoff Howl**

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